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MISCELLANIES

BY

CHARLES KINGSLEY,

RECTOR OF EVERSLEY;

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY.

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MISCELLANIES.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND HIS TIME.*

'TRUTH is stranger than fiction.' A trite remark. We all say it, again and again: but how few of us believe it! How few of us, when we read the history of heroical times and heroical men, take the story simply as it stands. On the contrary, we try to explain it away; to prove it all not to have been so very wonderful: to impute accident, circumstance, mean and commonplace motives; to lower every story down to the level of our own littleness, or what we (unjustly to ourselves, and to the God who is near us all) choose to consider our level; to rationalize away all the wonders, till we make them at last impossible, and give up caring to believe them; and prove to our own melancholy satisfaction that Alexander conquered the world with a pin, in his sleep, by accident.

And yet in this mood, as in most, there is a sort of left-handed truth involved. These heroes are not so far removed from us, after all. They were men of like passions with ourselves, with the same flesh about them, the same spirit within them, the same world

* North British Review. No. XLV. 1. 'Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.' By P. Fraser Tytler, F.R.S. London, 1853.—2. 'Raleigh's Discovery of Guiana.' Edited by Sir Robert Schomburgk. (Hakluyt Society), 1848.—3. 'Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh.' By M. Napier. Cambridge, 1853.—4. 'Raleigh's Works, with Lives by Oldys and Birch.' Oxford, 1829.—5. 'Bishop Goodman's History of his own Times.' London, 1839.

outside, the same devil beneath, the same God above. They and their deeds were not so very wonderful. Every child who is born into the world is just as wonderful; and, for aught we know, might, mutatis mutandis, do just as wonderful deeds. If accident and circumstance helped them, the same may help us: have helped us, if we will look back down our years, far more than we have made use of.

They were men, certainly, very much of our own level: but may we not put that level somewhat too low? They were certainly not what we are; for if they had been, they would have done no more than we: but is not a man's real level not what he is, but what he can be, and therefore ought to be? No doubt they were compact of good and evil, just as we: but so was David, no man more; though a more heroical personage (save One) appears not in all human records; but may not the secret of their success have been, that, on the whole (though they found it a sore battle), they refused the evil and chose the good? It is true, again, that their great deeds may be more or less explained, attributed to laws, rationalized: but is explaining always explaining away? Is it to degrade a thing to attribute it to a law? And do you do anything more by 'rationalizing' men's deeds than prove that they were rational men; men who saw certain fixed laws, and obeyed them, and succeeded thereby, according to the Baconian apophthegm, that nature is conquered by obeying her?

But what laws?

To that question, perhaps, the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews will give the best answer, where it says, that by faith were done all the truly great deeds, and by faith lived all the truly great men, who have ever appeared on earth.

There are, of course, higher and lower degrees of this faith; its object is one more or less worthy: but it is in all cases the belief in certain unseen eternal facts, by keeping true to which a man must in the long run succeed. Must; because he is more or less in harmony with heaven, and earth, and the Maker thereof, and has therefore fighting on his side a great portion of the universe; perhaps the whole; for as he who breaks one commandment of the law is guilty of the whole, because he denies the fount of all law, so he who with his whole soul keeps one commandment of it is likely to be in harmony with the whole, because he testifies of the fount of all law.

I shall devote a few pages to the story of an old hero, of a man of like passions with ourselves; of one who had the most intense and awful sense of the unseen laws, and succeeded mightily thereby; of one who had hard struggles with a flesh and blood which made him at times forget those laws, and failed mightily thereby: of one whom God so loved that He caused each slightest sin, as with David, to bring its own punishment with it, that while the flesh was delivered over to Satan, the man himself might be saved in the Day of the Lord; of one, finally, of whom nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand may say, 'I have done worse deeds than he: but I have never done as good ones.'

In a poor farm-house among the pleasant valleys of South Devon, among the white apple-orchards and the rich water-meadows, and the red fallows and red kine, in the year of grace 1552, a boy was born, as beautiful as day, and christened Walter Raleigh. His father was a gentleman of ancient blood: none older in the land: but, impoverished, he had settled down upon the wreck of his estate, in that poor farm-house. No

record of him now remains; but he must have been a man worth knowing and worth loving, or he would not have won the wife he did. She was a Champernoun, proudest of Norman squires, and could probably boast of having in her veins the blood of Courtneys, Emperors of Byzant. She had been the wife of the famous knight Sir Otho Gilbert, and lady of Compton Castle, and had borne him three brave sons, John, Humphrey, and Adrian; all three destined to win knighthood also in due time, and the two latter already giving promises, which they well fulfilled, of becoming most remarkable men of their time. And yet the fair Champernoun, at her husband's death, had chosen to wed Mr. Raleigh, and share life with him in the little farm-house at Hayes. She must have been a grand woman, if the law holds true that great men always have great mothers; an especially grand woman, indeed; for few can boast of having borne to two different husbands such sons as she bore. No record, as far as we know, remains of her; nor of her boy's early years. One can imagine them, nevertheless.

Just as he awakes to consciousness, the Smithfield fires are extinguished. He can recollect, perhaps, hearing of the burning of the Exeter martyrs; and he does not forget it; no one forgot or dared forget it in those days. He is brought up in the simple and manly, yet high-bred ways of English gentlemen in the times of 'an old courtier of the Queen's.' His two elder half-brothers also, living some thirty miles away, in the quaint and gloomy towers of Compton Castle, amid the apple-orchards of Torbay, are men as noble as ever formed a young lad's taste. Humphrey and Adrian Gilbert, who afterwards, both of them, rise to knighthood, are—what are they not? soldiers, scholars, Christians, discoverers and 'planters' of foreign lands,

geographers, alchemists, miners, Platonical philosophers; many-sided, high-minded men, not without fantastic enthusiasm; living heroic lives, and destined, one of them, to die a heroic death. From them Raleigh's fancy has been fired, and his appetite for learning quickened, while he is yet a daring boy, fishing in the grey trout-brooks, or going up with his father to the Dartmoor hills, to hunt the deer with hound and horn, amid the wooded gorges of Holne, or over the dreary downs of Hartland Warren, and the cloud-capt thickets of Cator's Beam, and looking down from thence upon the far blue southern sea, wondering when he shall sail thereon, to fight the Spaniard, and discover, like Columbus, some fairy-land of gold and gems.

For before this boy's mind, as before all intense English minds of that day, rise, from the first, three fixed ideas, which yet are but one—the Pope, the Spaniard, and America.

The two first are the sworn and internecine enemies (whether they pretend a formal peace or not) of Law and Freedom, Bible and Queen, and all that makes an Englishman's life dear to him. Are they not the incarnations of Antichrist? Their Moloch sacrifices flame through all lands. The earth groans because of them, and refuses to cover the blood of her slain. And America is the new world of boundless wonder and beauty, wealth and fertility, to which these two evil powers arrogate an exclusive and divine right; and God has delivered it into their hands; and they have done evil therein with all their might, till the story of their greed and cruelty rings through all earth and heaven. Is this the will of God? Will he not avenge for these things, as surely as he is the Lord who executeth justice and judgment in the earth?

These are the young boy's thoughts. These were

his thoughts for sixty-six eventful years. In whatsoever else he wavered, he never wavered in that creed. He learnt it in his boyhood, while he read Fox's Martyrs beside his mother's knee. He learnt it as a lad, when he saw his neighbours Hawkins and Drake changed by Spanish tyranny and treachery from peaceful merchantmen into fierce scourges of God. He learnt it scholastically, from fathers and divines, as an Oxford scholar, in days when Oxford was a Protestant indeed, in whom there was no guile. He learnt it when he went over, at seventeen years old, with his gallant kinsman Henry Champernoun, and his band of 100 gentlemen volunteers, to flesh his maiden sword in behalf of the persecuted French Protestants. He learnt it as he listened to the shrieks of the San Bartholomew; he learnt it as he watched the dragonnades, the tortures, the massacres of the Netherlands, and fought manfully under Norris in behalf of those victims of 'the Pope and Spain.' He preached it in far stronger and wiser words than I can express it for him, in that noble tract of 1591, on Sir Richard Grenville's death at the Azores—a Tyrtæan trumpet-blast such as has seldom rung in human ears; he discussed it like a cool statesman in his pamphlet of 1596, on 'A War with Spain.' He sacrificed for it the last hopes of his old age, the wreck of his fortunes, his just recovered liberty; and he died with the old God's battle-cry upon his lips, when it awoke no response from the hearts of a coward, profligate, and unbelieving generation. This is the background, the key-note of the man's whole life, of which, if we lose the recollection, and content ourselves by slurring it over in the last pages of his biography with some half-sneer about his putting, like the rest of Elizabeth's old admirals, 'the Spaniard, the Pope, and the Devil' in the same category, we shall understand very little about Raleigh;

though, of course, we shall save ourselves the trouble of pronouncing as to whether the Spaniard and the Pope were really in the same category as the devil; or, indeed, which might be equally puzzling to a good many historians of the last century and a half, whether there be any devil at all.

The books which I have chosen to head this review, are all of them more or less good, with one exception, and that is Bishop Goodman's Memoirs, on which much stress has been lately laid, as throwing light on various passages of Raleigh, Essex, Cecil, and James's lives. Having read it carefully, I must say plainly, that I think the book an altogether foolish, pedantic, and untrustworthy book, without any power of insight or gleam of reason; without even the care to be self-consistent; having but one object, the whitewashing of James, and of every noble lord whom the bishop has ever known: but in whitewashing each, the poor old flunkey so bespatters all the rest of his pets, that when the work is done, the whole party look, if possible, rather dirtier than before. And so I leave Bishop Goodman.

Mr. Fraser Tytler's book is well known; and it is on the whole a good one; because he really loves and admires the man of whom he writes: but he is wonderfully careless as to authorities, and too often makes the wish father to the thought—indeed to the fact. Moreover, he has all the usual sentimental cant about Mary Queen of Scots, and all the usual petty and prurient scandal about Elizabeth, which is simply anathema; and which prevents his really seeing the time in which Raleigh lived, and the element in which he moved. This sort of talk is happily dying out just now; but no one can approach the history of the Elizabethan age (perhaps of any age) without finding that truth is all but buried under mountains of dirt and chaff—an Augæan stable,

which, perhaps, will never be swept clean. Yet I have seen, with great delight, several attempts toward removal of the said superstratum of dirt and chaff from the Elizabethan histories, in several articles, all evidently from the same pen (and that one, more perfectly master of English prose than any man living), in the 'Westminster Review' and 'Fraser's Magazine.'*

Sir Robert Schomburgk's edition of the Guiana Voyage contains an excellent Life of Raleigh, perhaps the best yet written; of which I only complain, when it gives in to the stock-charges against Raleigh, as it were at second-hand, and just because they are stock-charges, and because, too, the illustrious editor (unable to conceal his admiration of a discoverer in many points so like himself), takes all through an apologetic tone of 'Please don't laugh at me. I daresay it is very foolish; but I can't help loving the man.'

Mr. Napier's little book is a reprint of two Edinburgh Review articles on Bacon and Raleigh. The first, a learned statement of facts in answer to some unwisdom of a Quarterly reviewer (possibly an Oxford Aristotelian; for 'we think we do know that sweet Roman hand'). It is clear, accurate, convincing, complete. There is no more to be said about the matter, save that facts are stubborn things.

The article on Raleigh is very valuable; first, because Mr. Napier has had access to many documents unknown to former biographers; and next, because he clears

* I especially entreat readers' attention to two articles in vindication of the morals of Queen Elizabeth, in 'Fraser's Magazine' of 1854; to one in the 'Westminster' of 1854, on Mary Stuart; and one in the same of 1852, on England's Forgotten Worthies, by a pen now happily well known in English literature, Mr. Anthony Froude's.

Raleigh completely from the old imputation of deceit about the Guiana mine, as well as of other minor charges. With his general opinion of Raleigh's last and fatal Guiana voyage, I have the misfortune to differ from him toto cœlo, on the strength of the very documents which he quotes. But Mr. Napier is always careful, always temperate, and always just, except where he, as I think, does not enter into the feelings of the man whom he is analysing. Let readers buy the book (it will tell them a hundred things they do not know) and be judge between Mr. Napier and me.

In the meanwhile, one cannot help watching with a smile how good old Time's scrubbing-brush, which clears away paint and whitewash from church pillars, does the same by such characters as Raleigh's. After each fresh examination, some fresh count in the hundred-headed indictment breaks down. The truth is, that as people begin to believe more in nobleness, and to gird up their loins to the doing of noble deeds, they discover more nobleness in others. Raleigh's character was in its lowest Nadir in the days of Voltaire and Hume. What shame to him? For so were more sacred characters than his. Shall the disciple be above his master? Especially when that disciple was but too inconsistent, and gave occasion to the uncircumcised to blaspheme? But Cayley, after a few years, refutes triumphantly Hume's silly slanders. He is a stupid writer: but he has sense enough, being patient, honest, and loving, to do that.

Mr. Fraser Tytler shovels away a little more of the dirt-heap; Mr. Napier clears him (for which we owe him many thanks), by simple statement of facts, from the charge of having deserted and neglected his Virginia colonists; Humboldt and Schomburgk from the charge of having lied about Guiana; and so on; each succes-

sive writer giving in generally on merest hearsay to the general complaint against him, either from fear of running counter to big names, or from mere laziness, and yet absolving him from that particular charge of which his own knowledge enables him to judge. In the trust that I may be able to clear him from a few more charges, I write these pages, premising that I do not profess to have access to any new and recondite documents. I merely take the broad facts of the story from documents open to all, and comment on them as every man should wish his own life to be commented on.

But I do so on a method which I cannot give up; and that is the Bible method; I say boldly, that historians have hitherto failed in understanding not only Raleigh and Elizabeth, but nine-tenths of the persons and facts in his day, because they will not judge them by the canons which the Bible lays down—by which I mean not only the New Testament, but the Old, which, as English Churchmen say, and Scotch Presbyterians have ere now testified with sacred blood, is 'not contrary to the New.'

Mr. Napier has a passage about Raleigh for which I am sorry, coming as it does from a countryman of John Knox. 'Society, it would seem, was yet in a state in which such a man could seriously plead, that the madness he feigned was justified' (his last word is unfair, for Raleigh only hopes that it is no sin) 'by the example of David, King of Israel!' What a shocking state of society when men actually believed their Bibles, not too little, but too much! For my part, I think that if poor dear Raleigh had considered the example of David a little more closely, he need never have feigned madness at all; and that his error lay quite in an opposite direction from looking on the

Bible heroes, David especially, as too sure models. At all events, let us try Raleigh by the very scriptural standard which he himself lays down, not merely in this case unwisely, but in his 'History of the World' more wisely than any historian whom we have ever read; and say, 'Judged as the Bible taught our Puritan forefathers to judge every man, the character is intelligible enough; tragic, but noble and triumphant: judged as men have been judged in history for the last hundred years, by hardly any canon save those of the private judgment, which philosophic cant, maudlin sentimentality, or fear of public opinion, may happen to have forged, the man is a phenomenon, only less confused, abnormal, suspicious than his biographers' notions about him.' Again I say, I have not solved the problem; but it will be enough if I make some think it both soluble, and worth solving.

Let us look round, then, and see into what sort of a country, into what sort of a world, the young adventurer is going forth, at seventeen years of age, to seek his fortune.

Born in 1552, his young life has sprung up and grown with the young life of England. The earliest fact, perhaps, which he can recollect, is the flash of joy on every face which proclaims that Mary Tudor is dead, and Elizabeth reigns at last. As he grows, the young man sees all the hope and adoration of the English people centre in that wondrous maid, and his own centre in her likewise. He had been base had he been otherwise. She comes to the throne with such a prestige as never sovereign came since the days when Isaiah sang his pæan over young Hezekiah's accession. Young, learned, witty, beautiful (as with such a father and mother she could not help being), with an expres-

sion of countenance remarkable (I speak of those early days) rather for its tenderness and intellectual depth than its strength, she comes forward as the Champion of the Reformed Faith, the interpretress of the will and conscience of the people of England—herself persecuted all but to the death, and purified by affliction, like gold tried in the fire. She gathers round her, one by one, young men of promise, and trains them herself to their work. And they fulfil it, and serve her, and grow grey-headed in her service, working as faithfully, as righteously, as patriotically, as men ever worked on earth. They are her 'favourites;' because they are men who deserve favour; men who count not their own lives dear to themselves for the sake of the queen and of that commonweal which their hearts and reasons tell them is one with her. They are still men, though; and some of them have their grudgings and envyings against each other: she keeps the balance even between them as skilfully, gently, justly, as woman ever did, or mortal man either. Some have their conceited hopes of marrying her, becoming her masters. She rebukes and pardons. 'Out of the dust I took you, sir! go and do your duty, humbly and rationally, henceforth, or into the dust I trample you again!' And they reconsider themselves, and obey. But many, or most of them, are new men, country gentlemen, and younger sons. She will follow her father's plan, of keeping down the overgrown feudal princes, who, though brought low by the wars of the Roses, are still strong enough to throw everything into confusion by resisting at once the Crown and Commons. Proud nobles reply by rebellion, come down southwards with ignorant Popish henchmen at their backs; will restore Popery, marry the Queen of Scots, make the middle class and the majority submit to the feudal

lords and the minority. The Alruna-maiden, with her 'aristocracy of genius,' is too strong for them; the people's heart is with her, and not with dukes. Each mine only blows up its diggers, and there are many dry eyes at their ruin. Her people ask her to marry. She answers gently, proudly, eloquently: 'She is married—the people of England is her husband. She has vowed it.' And well she keeps her vow. And yet there is a tone of sadness in that great speech. Her woman's heart yearns after love, after children; after a strong bosom on which to repose that weary head. But she knows that it must not be. She has her reward. 'Whosoever gives up husband or child for my sake and the gospel's, shall receive them back a hundredfold in this present life,' as Elizabeth does. Her reward is an adoration from high and low, which is to us now inexplicable, impossible, overstrained, which was not so then.

For the whole nation is in a mood of exaltation; England is fairyland; the times are the last days—strange, terrible, and glorious. At home are Jesuits plotting; dark, crooked-pathed, going up and down in all manner of disguises, doing the devil's work if men ever did it; trying to sow discord between man and man, class and class; putting out books full of filthy calumnies, declaring the queen illegitimate, excommunicate, a usurper; English law null and all state appointments void, by virtue of a certain 'Bull;' and calling on the subjects to rebellion and assassination, even on the bedchamber women to do to her 'as Judith did to Holofernes.' She answers by calm contempt. Now and then Burleigh and Walsingham catch some of the rogues, and they meet their deserts; but she for the most part lets them have their way. God is on her side, and she will not fear what man can do to her.

Abroad, the sky is dark and wild, and yet full of fantastic splendour. Spain stands strong and awful, a rising world-tyranny, with its dark-souled Cortezes and Pizarros, Alvas, Don Johns, and Parmas, men whose path is like the lava stream; who go forth slaying and to slay, in the name of their gods, like those old Assyrian conquerors on the walls of Nineveh, with tutelary genii flying above their heads, mingled with the eagles who trail the entrails of the slain. By conquest, intermarriage, or intrigue, she has made all the southern nations her vassals or her tools; close to our own shores, the Netherlands are struggling vainly for their liberties; abroad, the Western Islands, and the whole trade of Africa and India, will in a few years be hers. And already the Pope, whose 'most Catholic' and faithful servant she is, has repaid her services in the cause of darkness by the gift of the whole New World—a gift which she has claimed by cruelties and massacres unexampled since the days of Timour and Zinghis Khan. There she spreads and spreads, as Drake found her picture in the Government House at St. Domingo, the horse leaping through the globe, and underneath, 'Non suffieit orbis.' Who shall withstand her, armed as she is with the three-edged sword of Antichrist—superstition, strength, and gold?

English merchantmen, longing for some share in the riches of the New World, go out to trade in Guinea, in the Azores, in New Spain; and are answered by shot and steel. 'Both policy and religion,' as Fray Simon says, fifty years afterwards, 'forbid Christians to trade with heretics!' 'Lutheran devils, and enemies of God,' are the answer they get in words; in deeds, whenever they have a superior force they may be allowed to land, and to water their ships, even to trade, under exorbitant restrictions; but generally this is merely a trap

for them. Forces are hurried up; and the English are attacked treacherously, in spite of solemn compacts; for 'No faith need be kept with heretics.' And woe to them if any be taken prisoners, even wrecked. The galleys, and the rack, and the stake, are their certain doom; for the Inquisition claims the bodies and souls of heretics all over the world, and thinks it sin to lose its own. A few years of such wrong raise questions in the sturdy English heart What right have these Spaniards to the New World? The Pope's gift? Why, he gave it by the same authority by which he claims the whole world. The formula used when an Indian village is sacked is, that God gave the whole world to St. Peter, and that he has given it to his successors, and they the Indies to the King of Spain. To acknowledge that lie would be to acknowledge the very power by which the Pope claims a right to depose Queen Elizabeth, and give her dominions to whomsoever he will. A fico for bulls!

By possession, then? That may hold for Mexico, Peru, New Grenada, Paraguay, which have been colonized; though they were gained by means which make every one concerned in conquering them worthy of the gallows; and the right is only that of the thief to the purse whose owner he has murdered. But as for the rest—Why the Spaniard has not colonized, even explored, one-fifth of the New World, not even one-fifth of the coast. Is the existence of a few petty factories, often hundreds of miles apart, at a few river mouths, to give them a claim to the whole intermediate coast, much less to the vast unknown tracts inside? We will try that. If they appeal to the sword, so be it. The men are treacherous robbers; we will indemnify ourselves for our losses, and God defend the right.

So argued the English; and so sprung up that

strange war of reprisals, in which, for eighteen years, it was held that there was no peace between England and Spain beyond the line; *i.e.*, beyond the parallel of longitude where the Pope's gift of the western world was said to begin; and, as the quarrel thickened and neared, extended to the Azores, Canaries, and coasts of Africa, where English and Spaniards flew at each other as soon as seen, mutually and by common consent, as natural enemies, each invoking God in the battle with Antichrist.

Into such a world as this goes forth young Ralegh, his heart full of chivalrous worship for England's tutelary genius, his brain aflame with the true miracles of the new-found Hesperides, full of vague hopes, vast imaginations, and consciousness of enormous power. And yet he is no wayward dreamer, unfit for this workday world. With a vein of song 'most lofty, insolent, and passionate,' indeed unable to see aught without a poetic glow over the whole, he is eminently practical, contented to begin at the beginning, that he may end at the end; one who could work terribly, 'who always laboured at the matter in hand as if he were born only for that.' Accordingly, he sets to work faithfully and stoutly, to learn his trade of soldiering; and learns it in silence and obscurity. He shares (it seems) in the retreat at Moncontour, and is by at the death of Condé, and toils on for five years, marching and skirmishing, smoking the enemy out of mountain-caves in Languedoc, and all the wild work of war. During the San Bartholomew massacre we hear nothing of him; perhaps he took refuge with Sidney and others in Walsingham's house. No records of these years remain, save a few scattered reminiscences in his works, which mark the shrewd, observant eye of the future statesman.

When he returned we know not. We trace him,

in 1576, by some verses prefixed to Gascoigne's satire, The 'Steele Glass,' solid, stately, epigrammatic, 'by Walter Rawely of the Middle Temple.' The style is his; spelling of names matters nought in days in which a man would spell his own name three different ways in one document. Gascoigne, like Raleigh, knew Lord Grey of Wilton, and most men about town, too, and had been a soldier abroad, like Raleigh, probably with him. It seems to have been the fashion for young idlers to lodge among the Templars; indeed, toward the end of the century, they had to be cleared out, as crowding the wigs and gowns too much, and perhaps proving noisy neighbours, as Raleigh may have done. To this period may be referred, probably, his justice done on Mr. Charles Chester (Ben Jonson's Carlo Buffone), 'a perpetual talker, and made a noise like a drum in a room; so one time, at a tavern, Raleigh beats him and seals up his mouth, his upper and nether beard, with hard wax.' For there is a great laugh in Raleigh's heart, a genial contempt of asses; and one that will make him enemies hereafter: perhaps shorten his days.

One hears of him next (but only by report) in the Netherlands, under Norris, where the nucleus of the English line (especially of its musquetry) was training. For Don John of Austria intends not only to crush the liberties and creed of the Flemings, but afterwards to marry the Queen of Scots, and conquer England; and Elizabeth, unwillingly and slowly, for she cannot stomach rebels, has sent men and money to The States, to stop Don John in time; which the valiant English and Scotch do on Lammas-day, 1578, and that in a fashion till then unseen in war. For coming up late and panting, and 'being more sensible of a little heat of the sun, than of any cold fear of death,' they throw off their armour and clothes, and, in their shirts (not over-

clean, one fears), give Don John's rashness such a rebuff, that two months more see that wild meteor, with lost hopes and tarnished fame, die down and vanish below the stormy horizon. In these days, probably, it is that he knew Colonel Bingham, a soldier of fortune, of a 'fancy high and wild, too desultory and over-voluble,' who had, among his hundred-and-one schemes, one for the plantation of America; as poor Sir Thomas Stukely (whom Raleigh must have known well), uncle of the traitor Lewis, had for the peopling of Florida.

Raleigh returns: Ten years has he been learning his soldier's trade in silence. He will take a lesson in seamanship next. The court may come in time; for, by now, the poor squire's younger son must have discovered—perhaps even too fully—that he is not as other men are; that he can speak, and watch, and dare, and endure, as none around him can do. However, there are 'good adventures toward,' as the 'Morte d'Arthur' would say; and he will off with his half-brother Humphrey Gilbert, to carry out his patent for planting Meta Incognita,—'The Unknown Goal,' as Queen Elizabeth has named it,—which will prove to be too truly and fatally unknown. In a latitude south of England, and with an Italian summer, who can guess that the winter will out-freeze Russia itself? The merchant-seaman, like the statesman, had yet many a thing to learn. Instead of smiling at our forefathers' ignorance, let us honour the men who bought knowledge for us their children at the price of lives nobler than our own.

So Raleigh goes on his voyage with Humphrey Gilbert, to carry out the patent for discovering and planting in Meta Incognita: but the voyage prospers not. A 'smart brush with the Spaniards' sends them home again, with the loss of Morgan, their best captain, and 'a tall ship,' and Meta Incognita is forgotten for

a while: but not the Spaniards. Who are these who forbid all English, by virtue of the Pope's bull, to cross the Atlantic? That must be settled hereafter; and Raleigh, ever busy, is off to Ireland, to command a company in that 'common-weal, or rather common-woe,' as he calls it in a letter to Leicester. Two years and more pass here; and all the records of him which remain are of a man, valiant, daring, and yet prudent beyond his fellows. He hates his work: and is not on too good terms with stern and sour, but brave and faithful Lord Grey: but Lord Grey is Leicester's friend, and Raleigh works patiently under him, like a sensible man, just because he is Leicester's friend. Some modern gentleman of note (I forget who, and do not care to recollect) says, that Raleigh's 'prudence never bore any proportion to his genius.' The next biographer we open accuses him of being too calculating, cunning, time-serving; and so forth. Perhaps both are true. The man's was a character very likely to fall alternately into either sin,—doubtless, did so a hundred times. Perhaps both are false. The man's character was, on occasion, certain to rise above both faults. We have evidence that he did so his whole life long.

He is tired of Ireland at last: nothing goes right there (when has it?), nothing is to be done there. That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. He comes to London, and to Court. But how? By spreading his cloak over a muddy place for Queen Elizabeth to step on? It is a pretty story: very likely to be a true one: but biographers have slurred a few facts in their hurry to carry out their theory of 'favourites,' and to prove that Elizabeth took up Raleigh on the same grounds that the silliest boarding-school miss might have done. Not that I deny the cloak story, if true,

to be a very pretty story; perhaps it justifies, taken alone, Elizabeth's fondness for him. There may have been self-interest in it; we are bound, as 'men of the world,' to impute the dirtiest motive that we can find: but how many self-interested men do we know, who would have had quickness and daring to do such a thing? Men who are thinking about themselves are not generally either so quick-witted, or so inclined to throw away a good cloak, when by much scraping and saving they have got one. I never met a cunning, selfish, ambitious man who would have done such a thing. The reader may: but even if he has, we must ask him, for Queen Elizabeth's sake, to consider that this young Quixote is the close relation of two of the finest public men then living, Champernoun and Carew. That he is a friend of Sidney; a pet of Leicester; that he has left behind him at Oxford, and brought with him from Ireland, the reputation of being a rara avis, a new star in the firmament; that he has been a soldier in her Majesty's service (and in one in which she has a peculiar private interest) for twelve years; that he has held her commission as one of the triumvirate for governing Munster, and been the commander of the garrison at Cork; and that it is possible that she may have heard something of him before he threw his cloak under her feet, especially as there has been some controversy (which we have in vain tried to fathom) between him and Lord Grey about that terrible Smerwick slaughter; of the result of which we know little, but that Raleigh, being called in question about it in London, made such good play with his tongue, that his reputation as an orator and a man of talent was fixed once and for ever.

Within the twelve months he is sent on some secret diplomatic mission about the Anjou marriage; he is

in fact now installed in his place as 'a favourite.' And why not? If a man is found to be wise and witty, ready and useful, able to do whatsoever he is put to, why is a sovereign, who has eyes to see the man's worth, and courage to use it, to be accused of I know not what, because the said man happens to be good-looking?

Now comes the turning-point of Raleigh's life. What does he intend to be? Soldier, statesman, scholar, or sea-adventurer? He takes the most natural, yet not the wisest course. He will try and be all four at once. He has intellect for it; by worldly wisdom he may have money for it also. Even now he has contrived (no one can tell whence) to build a good bark of two hundred tons, and send her out with Humphrey Gilbert on his second and fatal voyage. Luckily for Raleigh she deserts and comes home, while not yet out of the Channel, or she had surely gone the way of the rest of Gilbert's squadron. Raleigh, of course, loses money by the failure, as well as the hopes which he had grounded on his brother's Transatlantic viceroyalty. And a bitter pang it must have been to him, to find himself bereft of that pure and heroic counsellor, just at his entering into life. But with the same elasticity which sent him to the grave, he is busy within six months in a fresh expedition. If Meta Incognita be not worth planting, there must be, so Raleigh thinks, a vast extent of coast between it and Florida, which is more genial in climate, perhaps more rich in produce; and he sends Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow to look for the same, and not in vain.

On these Virginian discoveries I shall say but little. Those who wish to enjoy them should read them in all their naïve freshness in the originals; they will sub-

scribe to S. T. Coleridge's dictum, that no one now-a-days can write travels as well as the old worthies could, who figure in Hakluyt and Purchas.

But to return to the question—What does this man intend to be? A discoverer and colonist; a vindicator of some part at least of America from Spanish claims? Perhaps not altogether: else he would have gone himself to Virginia, at least the second voyage, instead of sending others. But here, it seems, is the fatal, and yet pardonable mistake, which haunts the man throughout. He tries to be too many men at once. Fatal: because, though he leaves his trace on more things than (perhaps) did ever one man before or since, he, strictly speaking, conquers nothing, brings nothing to a consummation. Virginia, Guiana, the 'History of the World,' his own career as a statesman—as dictator (for he might have been dictator had he chosen), all are left unfinished. And yet most pardonable; for if a man feels that he can do many different things, how hard to teach himself that he must not do them all! How hard to say to himself, 'I must cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye.' I must be less than myself, in order really to be anything. I must concentrate my powers on one subject, and that perhaps by no means the most seemingly noble or useful, still less the most pleasant, and forego so many branches of activity in which I might be so distinguished, so useful.' This is a hard lesson. Raleigh took just sixty-six years learning it, and had to carry the result of his experience to the other side of the dark river, for there was no time left to use it on this side. Some readers may have learnt the lesson already. If so, happy and blessed are they. But let them not, therefore, exalt themselves above Walter Raleigh; for that lesson is (of course) soonest learnt by the man who can excel in

few things, later by him who can excel in many, and latest of all by him who, like Raleigh, can excel in all.

Few details remain concerning the earlier court days of Raleigh. He rises rapidly, as we have seen. He has an estate given him in Ireland, near his friend Spenser, where he tries to do well and wisely, colonizing, tilling, and planting it; but, like his Virginia expeditions, principally at second hand. For he has swallowed (there is no denying it) the painted bait. He will discover, he will colonize, he will do all manner of beautiful things, at second hand: but he himself will be a courtier. It is very tempting. Who would not, at the age of thirty, have wished to have been one of that chosen band of geniuses and heroes whom Elizabeth had gathered round her? Who would not, at the age of thirty, have given his pound of flesh to be captain of her guard, and to go with her whithersoever she went? It is not merely the intense gratification to carnal vanity (which if any man denies or scoffs at, always mark him down as especially guilty) which is to be considered; but the real, actual honour, in the mind of one who looked on Elizabeth as the most precious and glorious being which the earth had seen for centuries. To be appreciated by her; to be loved by her; to serve her; to guard her; what could man desire more on earth?

Beside, he becomes a member of Parliament now, Lord Warden of the Stannaries; business which of course keeps him in England, business which he performs (as he does all things) wisely and well. Such a generation as this ought really to respect Raleigh a little more, if it be only for his excellence in their own especial sphere—that of business. Raleigh is a thorough man of business. He can 'toil terribly,' and what is more, toil to the purpose. In all the everyday affairs of life, he remains without a blot;

a diligent, methodical, prudent man, who, though he plays for great stakes, ventures and loses his whole fortune again and again, yet never seems to omit the 'doing the duty which lies nearest him;' never gets into mean money scrapes; never neglects tenants or duty; never gives way for one instant to 'the eccentricities of genius.'

If he had done so, be sure that we should have heard of it. For no man can become what he has become without making many an enemy; and he has his enemies already. On which statement naturally occurs the question—why? An important question too; because several of his later biographers seem to have running in their minds some such train of thought as this—Raleigh must have been a bad fellow, or he would not have had so many enemies; and because he was a bad fellow, there is an *à priori* reason that charges against him are true. Whether this be arguing in a circle or not, it is worth searching out the beginning of this enmity, and the reputed causes of it. In after years it will be, because he is 'damnable proud;' because he hated Essex, and so forth: of which in their places. But what is the earliest count against him? Naunton (who hated Raleigh, and was moreover a rogue and a bad fellow) has no reason to give, but that 'the Queen took him for a kind of oracle, which much nettled them all; yea, those he relied on began to take this his sudden favour for an alarm; to be sensible of their own supplantation, and to project his; which shortly made him to sing, 'Fortune my foe.'"

Now, be this true or not, and we do not put much faith in it, it gives no reason for the early dislike of Raleigh, save the somewhat unsatisfactory one which Cain would have given for his dislike of Abel. More-

over, Mr. Tytler gives a letter of Essex's, written as thoroughly in the Cain spirit as any we ever read, and we wonder that, after, as he says, first giving that letter to the world, he could have found courage to repeat the old sentimentalism about the 'noble and unfortunate' Earl. His hatred of Raleigh (which, as we shall see hereafter, Raleigh not only bears patiently, but requites with good deeds as long as he can) springs, by his own confession, simply from envy and disappointed vanity. The spoilt boy insults Queen Elizabeth about her liking for the 'knave Raleigh.' She, 'taking hold of one word disdain,' tells Essex that 'there was no such cause why I should thus disdain him.' On which, says Essex, 'as near as I could I did describe unto her what he had been, and what he was; and then I did let her see, whether I had come to disdain his competition of love, or whether I could have comfort to give myself over to the service of a mistress that was in awe of such a man. I spake for grief and choler as much against him as I could: and I think he standing at the door might very well hear the worst that I spoke of him. In the end, I saw she was resolved to defend him, and to cross me.' Whereon follows a 'scene,' the naughty boy raging and stamping, till he insults the Queen, and calls Raleigh 'a wretch;' whereon poor Elizabeth, who loved the coxcomb for his father's sake, 'turned her away to my Lady Warwick,' and Essex goes grumbling forth.

On which letter, written before a single charge has been brought (as far as yet known, against Raleigh), Mr. Tytler can only observe that it 'throws much light on the jealousy' between Raleigh and Essex, 'and establishes the fact, that Elizabeth delighted to see them competing for her love.'

This latter sentence is one of those (too common)

which ought to rouse indignation. I have quoted only the passage which Mr. Tytler puts in italics, as proving his case: but let any reader examine that letter word by word, from end to end, and say whether even Essex, in the midst of his passion, selfishness, and hatred, lets one word drop which hints at Elizabeth '*delighting*' in seeing the competition, any more than one which brings a tangible charge against Raleigh. It is as gratuitous and wanton a piece of evil-speaking as we ever read in any book; yet, I am ashamed to say, it is but an average specimen of the fairness with which any fact is treated now-a-days, which relates to the greatest sovereign whom England ever saw, the 'Good Queen Bess,' of whom Cromwell the regicide never spoke without deepest respect and admiration.

Raleigh's next few years are brilliant and busy ones; and gladly, did space permit, would I give details of those brilliant adventures which make this part of his life that of a true knight-errant. But they are mere episodes in the history, and we must pass them quickly by, only saying that they corroborate in all things our original notion of the man—just, humane, wise, greatly daring and enduring greatly; and filled with the one fixed idea, which has grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, the destruction of the Spanish power, and colonization of America by English. His brother Humphrey makes a second attempt to colonize Newfoundland, and perishes as heroically as he had lived. Raleigh, undaunted by his own loss in the adventure and his brother's failure, sends out a fleet of his own to discover to the southward, and finds Virginia. One might spend pages on this beautiful episode; on the simple descriptions of the fair new land which the sea-kings bring home; on the profound (for those times at least) knowledge which

prompted Raleigh to make the attempt in that particular direction which had as yet escaped the notice of the Spaniards; on the quiet patience with which, undaunted by the ill-success of the first colonists, he sends out fleet after fleet, to keep the hold which he had once gained, till, unable any longer to support the huge expense, he makes over his patent for discovery to a company of merchants, who fare for many years as ill as Raleigh himself did: but one thing one has a right to say, that to this one man, under the providence of Almighty God, do the whole United States of America owe their existence. The work was double. The colony, however small, had to be kept in possession at all hazards; and he did it. But that was not enough. Spain must be prevented from extending her operations northward from Florida; she must be crippled along the whole east coast of America. And Raleigh did that too. We find him for years to come a part-adventurer in almost every attack on the Spaniards; we find him preaching war against them on these very grounds, and setting others to preach it also. Good old Hariot (Raleigh's mathematical tutor, whom he sent to Virginia) re-echoes his pupil's trumpet-blast. Hooker, in his epistle dedicatory of his Irish History, strikes the same note, and a right noble one it is. 'These Spaniards are trying to build up a world-tyranny by rapine and cruelty. You, sir, call on us to deliver the earth from them, by doing justly and loving mercy; and we will obey you!' is the answer which Raleigh receives (as far as we can find) from every nobler-natured Englishman.

It was an immense conception: a glorious one: it stood out so clear: there was no mistake about its being the absolutely right, wise, patriotic thing: and so feasible, too, if Raleigh could but find 'six cents

hommes qui savaient mourir.' But that was just what he could not find. He could draw round him, and did, by the spiritual magnetism of his genius, many a noble soul: but he could not organize them, as he seems to have tried to do, into a coherent body. The English spirit of independent action, never stronger than in that age, and most wisely encouraged (for other reasons) by good Queen Bess, was too strong for him. His pupils will 'fight on their own hook' like so many Yankee rangers; quarrel with each other: grumble at him. For the truth is, he demands of them too high a standard of thought and purpose. He is often a whole heaven above them in the hugeness of his imagination, the nobleness of his motive; and Don Quixote can often find no better squire than Sancho Panza. Even glorious Sir Richard Grenvil makes a mess of it: burns an Indian village because they steal a silver cup; throws back the colonization of Virginia ten years with his over-strict notions of discipline and retributive justice; and Raleigh requites him for his offence by embalming him, his valour and his death, not in immortal verse, but in immortal prose. The 'True Relation of the Fight at the Azores' gives the key-note of Raleigh's heart. If readers will not take that as the text on which his whole life is a commentary, they may know a great deal about him, but him they will never know.

The game becomes fiercer and fiercer. Blow and counterblow between the Spanish king (for the whole West-Indian commerce was a government job) and the merchant nobles of England. At last, the Great Armada comes, and the Great Armada goes again. 'Venit, vidit, fugit,' as the medals said of it. And to Walter Raleigh's counsel, by the testimony of all contemporaries, the mighty victory is to be principally

attributed. Where all men did heroically, it were invidious to bestow on him alone a crown, 'ob patriam servatam.' But henceforth, Elizabeth knows well that she has not been mistaken in her choice; and Raleigh is better loved than ever, heaped with fresh wealth and honours. And who deserves them better?

The immense value of his services in the defence of England should excuse him from the complaint which one has been often inclined to bring against him,—Why, instead of sending others Westward Ho, did he not go himself? Surely he could have reconciled the jarring instruments with which he was working. He could have organized such a body of men as perhaps never went out before or since on the same errand. He could have done all that Cortez did, and more; and done it more justly and mercifully.

True. And here seems (as far as little folk dare judge great folk) to have been his mistake. He is too wide for real success. He has too many plans; he is fond of too many pursuits. The man who succeeds is generally the narrow man; the man of one idea, who works at nothing but that; sees everything only through the light of that; sacrifices everything to that; the fanatic, in short. By fanatics, whether military, commercial, or religious, and not by 'liberal-minded men' at all, has the world's work been done in all ages. Amid the modern cants, one of the most mistaken is the cant about the 'mission of genius,' the 'mission of the poet.' Poets, we hear in some quarters, are the anointed kings of mankind,—at least, so the little poets sing, each to his little fiddle. There is no greater mistake. It is the practical, prosaical fanatic who does the work; and the poet, if he tries to do it, is certain to put down his spade every five minutes, to look at the prospect, and pick flowers, and

moralize on dead asses, till he ends a 'Néron malgré lui-même,' fiddling melodiously while Rome is burning. And perhaps this is the secret of Raleigh's failure. He is a fanatic no doubt, a true knight-errant: but he is too much of a poet withal. The sense of beauty inthrals him at every step. Gloriana's fairy court, with its chivalries and its euphuisms, its masques and its tourneys, and he the most charming personage in it, are too charming for him—as they would have been for us, reader: and he cannot give them up, and go about the one work. He justifies his double-mindedness to himself, no doubt, as he does to the world, by working wisely, indefatigably, and bravely; but still he has put his trust in princes, and in the children of men. His sin, as far as we can see, is not against man, but against God: one which we do not now-a-days call a sin, but a weakness. Be it so. God punished him for it, swiftly and sharply; which I hold to be a sure sign that God also forgave him for it.

So he stays at home, spends, sooner or later, 40,000*l.* on Virginia, writes charming court-poetry with Oxford, Buckhurst, and Paget, brings over Spenser from Ireland, and introduces Colin Clout to Gloriana, who loves—as who would not have loved?—that most beautiful of faces and of souls; helps poor puritan Udall out of his scrape as far as he can; begs for Captain Spring, begs for many more, whose names are only known by being connected with some good deed of his. 'When, Sir Walter,' asks Queen Bess, 'will you cease to be a beggar?' 'When your Majesty ceases to be a benefactor.' Perhaps it is in these days that he set up his 'office of address,'—some sort of agency for discovering and relieving the wants of worthy men. So all seems to go well. If he has lost in Virginia,

he has gained by Spanish prizes; his wine-patent is bringing him in a large revenue, and the heavens smile on him. 'Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art poor and miserable and blind and naked.' Thou shalt learn it, then, and pay dearly for thy lesson.

For, in the meanwhile, Raleigh falls into a very great sin, for which, as usual with his elect, God inflicts swift and instant punishment; on which, as usual, biographers talk much unwisdom. He seduces Miss Throgmorton, one of the maids of honour. Elizabeth is very wroth; and had she not good reason to be wroth? Is it either fair or reasonable to talk of her 'demanding a monopoly of love,' and 'being incensed at the temerity of her favourite, in presuming to fall in love and marry without her consent?' Away with such prurient cant. The plain facts are: that a man nearly forty years old abuses his wonderful gifts of body and mind, to ruin a girl nearly twenty years younger than himself. What wonder if a virtuous woman (and Queen Elizabeth was virtuous) thought it a base deed, and punished it accordingly? There is no more to be discovered in the matter, save by the vulturine nose which smells a carrion in every rose-bed. Raleigh has a great attempt on the Plate-fleets in hand; he hurries off, from Chatham, and writes to young Cecil, on the 10th of March, 'I mean not to come away, as some say I will, for fear of a marriage, and I know not what. . . . For I protest before God, there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened unto.'

This famous passage is one of those over which the virtuosity of modern times, rejoicing in evil, has hung so fondly, as giving melancholy proof of the 'duplicity

of Raleigh's character;' as if a man who once in his life had told an untruth was proved by that fact to be a rogue from birth to death: while others have kindly given him the benefit of a doubt whether the letter were not written after a private marriage, and therefore Raleigh, being 'joined unto' some one already, had a right to say, that he did not wish to be joined to any one. But we do not concur in this doubt. Four months after, Sir Edward Stafford writes to Anthony Bacon, 'If you have anything to do with Sir W. R., or any love to make to Mistress Throgmorton, at the Tower to-morrow you may speak with them.' This implies that no marriage had yet taken place. And surely, if there had been a private marriage, two people who were about to be sent to the Tower for their folly would have made the marriage public at once, as the only possible self-justification. But it is a pity, in our opinion, that biographers, before pronouncing upon that supposed lie of Raleigh's, had not taken the trouble to find out what the words mean. In their virtuous haste to prove him a liar, they have overlooked the fact that the words, as they stand, are unintelligible, and the argument self-contradictory. He wants to prove, we suppose, that he does not go to sea for fear of being forced to marry Miss Throgmorton. It is, at least, an unexpected method of so doing in a shrewd man like Raleigh, to say that he wishes to marry no one at all. 'Don't think that I run away for fear of a marriage, for I do not wish to marry any one on the face of the earth,' is a speech which may prove Raleigh to have been a goose, but we must understand it before we can say that it proves him a rogue. If we had received such a letter from a friend, we should have said at once, 'Why the man, in his hurry and confusion, has omitted *the* word; he must have meant to write, not 'There is

none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened to,' but 'There is none on the face of the earth that I would *rather* be fastened to,'' which would at once make sense, and suit fact. For Raleigh not only married Miss Throgmorton forthwith, but made her the best of husbands. My conjectural emendation may go for what it is worth; but that the passage, as it stands in Murdin's State papers (the MSS. I have not seen) is either misquoted, or miswritten by Raleigh himself, I cannot doubt. He was not one to think nonsense, even if he scribbled it.

The Spanish raid turns out well. Raleigh overlooks Elizabeth's letters of recall till he finds out that the King of Spain has stopped the Plate-fleet for fear of his coming, and then returns, sending on Sir John Burrough to the Azores, where he takes the 'Great Carack,' the largest prize (1600 tons) which had ever been brought into England. The details of that gallant fight stand in the pages of Hakluyt. It raised Raleigh once more to wealth, though not to favour. Shortly after he returns from the sea, he finds himself, where he deserves to be, in the Tower, where he does more than one thing which brought him no credit. How far we are justified in calling his quarrel with Sir George Carew, his keeper, for not letting him 'disguise himself, and get into a pair of oars to ease his mind but with a sight of the queen, or his heart would break,' hypocrisy, is a very different matter. Honest Arthur Gorges (a stanch friend of Raleigh's) tells the story laughingly and lovingly, as if he thought Raleigh sincere, but somewhat mad; and yet honest Gorges has a good right to say a bitter thing; for after having been 'ready to break with laughing at seeing them two brawl and scramble like madmen, and Sir George's new periwig

torn off his crown,' he sees 'the iron walking' and daggers out, and playing the part of him who taketh a dog by the ears, 'purchased such a rap on the knuckles, that I wished both their pates broken, and so with much ado they staid their brawl to see my bloody fingers,' and then set to work to abuse the hapless peacemaker. After which things Raleigh writes a letter to Cecil, which is still more offensive in the eyes of virtuous biographers,—how 'his heart was never broken till this day, when he hears the queen goes so far off, whom he followed with love and desire on so many journeys, and am now left behind in a dark prison all alone.' . . . . 'I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks,' and so forth, in a style in which the vulturine nose must needs scent carrion, just because the roses are more fragrant than they should be in a world where all ought to be either vultures, or carrion for their dinners. As for his despair, had he not good reason to be in despair? By his own sin, he has hurled himself down the hill which he has so painfully climbed. He is in the Tower—surely no pleasant or hopeful place for any man. Elizabeth is exceeding wroth with him; and what is worse, he deserves what he has got. His whole fortune is ventured in an expedition over which he has no control, which has been unsuccessful in its first object, and may be altogether unsuccessful in that which it has undertaken as a pis-aller, and so leave him penniless. There want not, too, those who will trample on the fallen. The deputy has been cruelly distraining on his Irish tenants for a 'supposed debt of his to the Queen of 400*l.* for rent,' which was indeed but fifty merks, and which was

paid, and has carried off 500 milch kine from the poor settlers whom he has planted there, and forcibly thrust him out of possession of a castle. Moreover, the whole Irish estates are likely to come to ruin, for nothing prevails but rascality among the English soldiers, impotence among the governors, and rebellion among the natives. Three thousand Burkes are up in arms; his 'prophecy of this rebellion' ten days ago was laughed at, and now has come true; and altogether, Walter Raleigh and all belonging to him is in as evil case as he ever was on earth. No wonder, poor fellow, if he bchowls himself lustily, and not always wisely, to Cecil, and every one else who will listen to him.

As for his fine speeches about Elizabeth, why forget the standing-point from which such speeches were made? Over and above his present ruin, it was (and ought to have been) an utterly horrible and unbearable thing to Raleigh, or any man, to have fallen into disgrace with Elizabeth by his own fault. He feels (and perhaps rightly) that he is as it where excommunicate from England, and the mission and the glory of England. Instead of being, as he was till now, one of a body of brave men working together in one great common cause, he has cut himself off from the congregation by his own selfish lust, and there he is left alone with his shame. We must try to realize to ourselves the way in which such men as Raleigh looked not only at Elizabeth, but at all the world. There was, in plain palpable fact, something about her, her history, her policy, the times, the glorious part which England, and she as the incarnation of the then English spirit, were playing upon earth, which raised imaginative and heroical souls into a permanent exaltation—a 'fairy-land,' as they called it themselves, which seems to us fantastic, and would be fantastic in us, because we are

not at their work, or in their days. There can be no doubt that a number of as noble men as ever stood together on the earth, did worship that woman, fight for her, toil for her, risk all for her, with a pure chivalrous affection which has furnished one of the beautiful pages in all the book of history. Blots there must needs have been, and inconsistencies, selfishnesses, follies; for they too were men of like passions with ourselves; but let us look at the fair vision as a whole, and thank God that such a thing has for once existed even imperfectly on this sinful earth: instead of playing the part of Ham, and falling under his curse; the penalty of slavishness, cowardice, loss of noble daring, which surely falls on any generation which is 'banausos,' to use Aristotle's word—which rejoices in its forefathers' shame, and unable to believe in the nobleness of others, is unable to become noble itself.

As for the 'Alexander and Diana' affectations, they were the language of the time: and certainly this generation has no reason to find fault with them, or with a good deal more of the 'affectations' and 'flattery' of Elizabethan times, while it listens complacently night after night to 'honourable members' complimenting not Queen Elizabeth, but Sir Jabesh Windbag, Fiddle, Faddle, Red-tape, and party, with protestations of deepest respect and fullest confidence in the very speeches in which they bring accusations of every offence short of high-treason—to be understood, of course, in a 'parliamentary sense,' as Mr Pickwick's were in a 'Pickwickian' one. If a generation of Knoxes and Mortons, Burleighs and Raleighs, shall ever arise again, one wonders by what name they will call the parliamentary morality, and parliamentary courtesy of a generation which has meted out such measure to their ancestors' failings?

'But Queen Elizabeth was an old woman then.' I thank the objector even for that 'then;' for it is much now-a-days to find any one who believes that Queen Elizabeth was ever young, or who does not talk of her as if she was born about seventy years of age, covered with rouge and wrinkles. I will undertake to say, that as to the beauty of this woman there is a greater mass of testimony, and from the very best judges too, than there is of the beauty of any personage in history; and yet it has become the fashion now to deny even that. The plain facts seem, that she was very graceful, active, accomplished in all outward manners, of a perfect figure, and of that style of intellectual beauty, depending on expression, which attracted (and we trust always will attract) Britons, far more than that merely sensuous loveliness in which no doubt Mary Stuart far surpassed her. And there seems little doubt, that like many Englishwomen, she retained her beauty to a very late period in life, not to mention that she was, in 1592, just at that age of rejuvenescence which makes many a woman more lovely at sixty than she has been since she was thirty-five. No doubt, too, she used every artificial means to preserve her famous complexion; and quite right she was. This beauty of hers had been a talent (as all beauty is) committed to her by God; it had been an important element in her great success; men had accepted it as what beauty of form and expression generally is, an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace; and while the inward was unchanged, what wonder if she tried to preserve the outward? If she was the same, why should she not try to look the same? And what blame to those who worshipped her, if, knowing that she was the same, they too should fancy that she looked the same —the Elizabeth of their youth, and should talk as if the

fair flesh, as well as the fair spirit, was immortal? Does not every loving husband do so, when he forgets the grey hair and the sunken cheek, and all the wastes of time; and sees the partner of many joys and sorrows not as she has become, but as she was, ay, and is to him, and will be to him, he trusts, through all eternity? There is no feeling in these Elizabethan worshippers which we have not seen, potential and crude, again and again in the best and noblest of young men whom we have met, till it was crushed in them by the luxury, effeminacy, and unbelief in chivalry, which is the sure accompaniment of a long peace; which war may burn up with beneficent fire; which, to judge by the unexpected heroisms and chivalries of the last three years, it is burning up already.

But we must hasten on now; for Raleigh is out of prison in September; and by the next spring in parliament, speaking wisely and well, especially on his fixed idea, war with Spain, which he is rewarded for forthwith in Father Passon's 'Andreæ Philopatris Responsio,' by a charge of founding a school of Atheism for the corruption of young gentlemen; a charge which Lord Chief-Justice Popham, Protestant as he is, will find it useful one day to recollect.

Elizabeth, however, now that he has married the fair Throgmorton, and done wisely in other matters, restores him to favour. If he has sinned, he has suffered: but he is as useful as ever, now that his senses have returned to him, and he is making good speeches in parliament, instead of bad ones to weak maidens; so we find him once more in favour, and possessor of Sherborne Manor, where he builds and beautifies, with 'groves and gardens of much variety and great delight.' And God, too, seems to have forgiven him; perhaps has forgiven; for there the fair

Throgmorton brings him a noble boy. Ut sis vitalis metuo puer!

Raleigh will quote David's example one day, not wisely or well. Does David's example ever cross him now, and those sad words,—'The Lord hath put away thy sin, . . . nevertheless the child that is born unto thee shall die?'

Let that be as it may, all is sunshine once more. Sherborne Manor, a rich share in the great carack, a beautiful wife, a child; what more does this man want to make him happy? Why should he not settle down upon his lees, like ninety-nine out of the hundred, or at least try a peaceful and easy path toward more 'praise and pudding?' The world answers, or his biographers answer for him, that he needs to reinstate himself in his mistress's affection; which is true or not, according as we take it. If they mean thereby, as most seem to mean, that it was a mere selfish and ambitious scheme by which to wriggle into court favour once more—why, let them mean it: I shall only observe, that the method which Raleigh took was a rather more dangerous and self-sacrificing one than courtiers are wont to take. But if it be meant that Walter Raleigh spoke somewhat thus with himself,—'I have done a base and dirty deed, and have been punished for it. I have hurt the good name of a sweet woman who loves me, and whom I find to be a treasure; and God, instead of punishing me by taking her from me, has rendered me good for evil by giving her to me. I have justly offended a mistress whom I worship, and who, after having shown her just indignation, has returned me good for evil by giving me these fair lands of Sherborne, and only forbid me her presence till the scandal has passed away. She sees, and rewards my good in spite of my evil; and I, too, know that I am better than I

have seemed; that I am fit for nobler deeds than seducing maids of honour. How can I prove that? How can I redeem my lost name for patriotism and public daring? How can I win glory for my wife, seek that men shall forget her past shame in the thought, 'She is Walter Raleigh's wife?' How can I show my mistress that I loved her all along, that I acknowledge her bounty, her mingled justice and mercy? How can I render to God for all the benefits which He has done unto me? How can I do a deed the like of which was never done in England?'

If all this had passed through Walter Raleigh's mind, what could we say of it, but that it was the natural and rational feeling of an honourable and right-hearted man, burning to rise to the level which he knew ought to be his, because he knew that he had fallen below it? And what right better way of testifying these feelings than to do what, as we shall see, Raleigh did? What right have we to impute to him lower motives than these, while we confess that these righteous and noble motives would have been natural and rational;—indeed, just what we flatter ourselves that we should have felt in his place? Of course, in his grand scheme, the thought came in, 'And I shall win to myself honour, and glory, and wealth,'—of course. And pray, sir, does it not come in in your grand schemes; and yours; and yours? If you made a fortune to-morrow by some wisely and benevolently managed factory, would you forbid all speech of the said wisdom and benevolence, because you had intended that wisdom and benevolence should pay you a good percentage? Are Price's Patent Candle Company the less honourable and worthy men, because their righteousness has proved to be a good investment? Away with cant, and let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.

So Raleigh hits upon a noble project; a desperate one, true: but he will do it or die. He will leave pleasant Sherborne, and the bosom of the beautiful bride, and the first-born son; and all which to most makes life worth having, and which Raleigh enjoys more intensely (for he is a poet, and a man of strong nervous passions withal) than most men. But,—

> I could not love thee, dear, so much,
> Loved I not honour more.

And he will go forth to endure heat, hunger, fever, danger of death in battle, danger of the Inquisition, rack, and stake, in search of El Dorado. What so strange in that? I have known half-a-dozen men who, in his case, and conscious of his powers, would have done the same from the same noble motive.

He begins prudently; and sends a Devonshire man, Captain Whiddon (probably one of the Whiddons of beautiful Chagford), to spy out the Orinoco. He finds that the Spaniards are there already; that Berreo, who has attempted El Dorado from the westward, starting from New Granada and going down the rivers, is trying to settle on the Orinoco mouth; that he is hanging the poor natives, encouraging the Caribs to hunt them and sell them for slaves, imprisoning the Caciques to extort their gold, torturing, ravishing, kidnapping, and conducting himself as was usual among Spaniards of those days.

Raleigh's spirit is stirred within him. If 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' (fiction as it is) excite us, how must a far worse reality have excited Raleigh, as he remembered that these Spaniards are as yet triumphant in iniquity, and as he remembered, too, that these same men are the sworn foes of England, her liberty, her Bible, and her queen? What a deed, to be beforehand with them for once! To dispossess them of one corner of that western world, where they have left no trace but blood

and flame! He will go himself; he will find El Dorado and its golden Emperor; and, instead of conquering, plundering, and murdering him, as Cortez did Montezuma, and Pizarro Atahuallpa, he will show him English strength, espouse his quarrel against the Spaniards; make him glad to become Queen Elizabeth's vassal tributary, leave him perhaps a body guard of English veterans, perhaps colonize his country, and so at once avenge and protect the oppressed Indians, and fill the Queen's treasury with the riches of a land equal, if not superior, to Peru and Mexico.

Such is his dream; vague perhaps: but far less vague than those with which Cortez and Pizarro started, and succeeded. After a careful survey of the whole matter, I must give it as my deliberate opinion, that Raleigh was more reasonable in his attempt, and had more fair evidence of its feasibility, than either Cortez or Pizarro had for theirs. It is a bold assertion. If any reader doubts its truth, he cannot do better than to read the whole of the documents connected with the two successful, and the one unsuccessful, attempts at finding a golden kingdom. Let them read first Prescott's 'Conquests at Mexico and Peru,' and then Schomburgk's edition of Raleigh's 'Guiana.' They will at least confess when they have finished, that truth is stranger than fiction.

Of Raleigh's credulity in believing in El Dorado, much has been said. I am sorry to find even so wise a man as Sir Robert Schomburgk, after bearing good testimony to Raleigh's wonderful accuracy about all matters which he had an opportunity of observing, using this term of credulity. I must dare to differ on that point even with Sir Robert, and ask by what right the word is used? First, Raleigh says nothing about El Dorado (as every one is forced to confess) but what Spaniard on Spaniard had been saying for

fifty years. Therefore the blame of eredulity ought to rest with the Spaniards, from Philip von Huten, Orellana, and George of Spires, upward to Berreo. But it rests really with no one. For nothing, if we will examine the doeuments, is told of the riches of El Dorado which had not been found to be true, and seen by the eyes of men still living, in Peru and Mexico. Not one-fifth of America had been explored, and already two El Dorados had been found and conquered. What more rational than to suppose that there was a third, a fourth, a fifth, in the remaining four-fifths? The reports of El Dorado among the savages were just of the same kind as those by which Cortez and Pizarro hunted out Mexico and Peru, saving that they were far more widely spread, and confirmed by a succession of adventurers. I entreat readers to examine this matter, in Raleigh, Schomburgk, Humboldt, and Condamine, and judge for themselves. As for Hume's aceusations, I pass them by as equally silly and shameless, only saying, for the benefit of readers, that they have been refuted completely by every one who has written sinee Hume's days: and to those who are inclined to laugh at Raleigh for believing in Amazons and 'men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders,' I can only answer thus.

About the Amazons, Ralcigh told what he was told; what the Spaniards who went before him, and Condamine who came after him, were told; Humboldt thinks the story possibly founded on fact; and I must say, that after reviewing all that has been said thereon, it does seem to me the simplest solution of the matter just to believe it true; to believe that there was, about his time, or a little before, somewhere about the upper Orinoco, a warlike community of women, (Humboldt shows how likely such would be to spring up where women flee from their male tyrants into the

forests.) As for the fable which connected them with the lake Manoa, and the city of El Dorado, we can only answer, 'If not true there and then, it is true elsewhere now;' for the Amazonian guards of the King of Dahomey at this moment, as all know, surpass in strangeness and in ferocity all that has been reported of the Orinocan viragos, and thus prove once more, that truth is stranger than fiction.*

Beside; and here I stand stubborn, regardless of gibes and sneers; it is not yet proven that there was not in the sixteenth century, some rich and civilized kingdom like Peru or Mexico, in the interior of South America. Sir Robert Schomburgk has disproved the existence of Lake Parima: but it will take a long time, and more explorers than one, to prove that there are no ruins of ancient cities, such as Stephens stumbled on in Yucatan, still buried in the depths of the forests. Fifty years of ruin would suffice to wrap them in a leafy veil which would hide them from every one who did not literally run against them. Tribes would die out, or change place, (as the Aturcs, and many other great nations have done in those parts,) and every traditional record of them perish gradually, (for it is only gradually and lately that it has perished;) while if it be asked, What has become of the people themselves? the answer is, that when any race, (like most of the American races in the sixteenth century,) is in a dying state, it hardly needs war to thin it down, and reduce the remnant to savagery. Greater nations than El Dorado was even supposed to be have vanished ere now, and left not a trace behind; and so may they. But enough of this. I leave the quarrel to that honest and patient warder of tourneys, Old Time, who will surely do right at last, and go on to the dog-headed

* Since this was written, a similar Amazonian body-guard has been discovered, I hear, in Pegu.

worthies, without necks, and long hair hanging down behind, who, as a cacique told Raleigh, that 'they had of late years slain many hundreds of his father's people,' and in whom even Humboldt was not always allowed (he says) to disbelieve, (so much for Hume's scoff at Raleigh as a liar,) one old cacique boasting to him that he had seen them with his own eyes. Humboldt's explanation is, that the Caribs, being the cleverest and strongest Indians, are also the most imaginative; and therefore, being fallen children of Adam, the greatest liars, and that they invented both El Dorado and the dog-heads out of pure wickedness. Be it so. But all lies crystallize round some nucleus of truth; and it really seems to me nothing very wonderful, if the story should be on the whole true, and these worthies were in the habit of dressing themselves up, like foolish savages as they were, in the skins of the Aguara dog, with what not of stuffing, and tails, and so forth, in order to astonish the weak minds of the Caribs, just as the Red Indians dress up in their feasts as bears, wolves, and deer, with fox tails, false bustles of bison skin, and so forth. There are plenty of traces of such foolish attempts at playing 'bogy' in the history of savages, even of our own Teutonic forefathers; and this I suspect to be the simple explanation of the whole marc's nest. As for Raleigh being a fool for believing it; the reasons he gives for believing it are very rational; the reasons Hume gives for calling him a fool rest merely on the story's being strange; on which grounds one might disbelieve most matters in heaven and earth, from one's own existence to what one sees in every drop of water under the microscope, yea, to the growth of every seed. The only sound proof that dog-headed men are impossible, is to be found in comparative anatomy, a science of which Hume knew no more than

Raleigh, and which for one marvel it has destroyed, has revealed a hundred. I do not doubt, that if Raleigh had seen and described a kangaroo, especially its all but miraculous process of gestation, Hume would have called that a lie also: but I will waste no more time in proving that no man is so credulous as the unbeliever—the man who has such mighty and world-embracing faith in himself, that he makes his own little brain the measure of the universe. Let the dead bury their dead.

He sails for Guiana. The details of his voyage should be read at length. Everywhere they show the eye of a poet as well as of a man of science. He sees enough to excite his hopes more wildly than ever; he goes hundreds of miles up the Orinoco in an open boat, suffering every misery: but keeping up the hearts of his men, who cry out, 'Let us go on, we care not how far.' He makes friendship with the caciques, and enters into alliance with them on behalf of Queen Elizabeth against the Spaniards. Unable to pass the falls of the Caroli, and the rainy season drawing on, he returns, beloved and honoured by all the Indians, boasting that, during the whole time he was there, no woman was the worse for any man of his crew. Altogether, we know few episodes of history so noble, righteous, and merciful, as this Guiana voyage. But he has not forgotten the Spaniards. At Trinidad he attacks and destroys (at the entreaty of the oppressed Indians) the new town of San José, takes Berreo prisoner, and delivers from captivity five caciques, whom Berreo kept bound in one chain, 'basting their bodies with burning bacon,' (an old trick of the Conquistadores,) to make them discover their gold. He tells them that he was 'the servant of a queen who was the greatest cacique of the north, and a virgin; who had more

caciqui under her than there were trees on that island; that she was an enemy of the Castellani (Spaniards), in behalf of their tyranny and oppression, and that she delivered all such nations about her as were by them oppressed, and having freed all the coast of the northern world from their servitude, had sent me to free them also, and withal to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and conquest.' After which perfectly true and rational speech, he subjoins, (as we think equally honestly and rationally,) 'I shewed them her Majesty's picture, which they so admired and honoured, as it had been easy to have brought them idolators thereof.'

This is one of the stock-charges against Raleigh, at which all biographers (except quiet, sensible Oldys, who, dull as he is, is far more fair and rational than most of his successors) break into virtuous shrieks of 'flattery,' 'meanness,' 'adulation,' 'courtiership,' and so forth. Mr. Napier must say a witty thing for once, and is of opinion that the Indians would have admired far more the picture of a 'red monkey.' Sir Robert Schomburgk (unfortunately for the red monkey theory), though he quite agrees that Raleigh's flattery was very shocking, says, that from what he knows (and no man knows more) of Indian taste, they would have far preferred to the portrait which Raleigh showed them (not Mr. Napier's red monkey, but) such a picture as that at Hampton Court, in which Elizabeth is represented in a fantastic court dress. Raleigh, it seems, must be made out a rogue at all risks, though by the most opposite charges. Mr. Napier is answered, however, by Sir Robert; and Sir Robert is answered, we think, by the plain fact, that, of course, Raleigh's portrait was exactly such a one as Sir Robert says they would have admired; a picture probably in a tawdry frame, representing Queen Bess, just as queens were always painted then, bedizened

with 'browches, pearls, and owches,' satin and ruff, and probably with crown on head and sceptre in hand, made up as likely as not expressly for the purpose for which it was used. In the name of all simplicity and honesty, I ask, why is Raleigh to be accused of saying that the Indians admired Queen Elizabeth's beauty, when he never even hints at it? And why do all commentators deliberately forget the preceding paragraph, Raleigh's proclamation to the Indians, and the circumstances under which it was spoken? The Indians are being murdered, ravished, sold for slaves, basted with burning fat; and grand white men come like avenging angels, and in one day sweep their tyrants out of the land, restore them to liberty and life, and say to them, 'A great Queen far across the seas has sent us to do this. Thousands of miles away she has heard of your misery, and taken pity on you; and if you will be faithful to her she will love you, and deal justly with you, and protect you against these Spaniards who are devouring you as they have devoured all the Indians round you; and for a token of it—a sign that we tell you truth, and that there is really such a great Queen, who is the Indian's friend—here is the picture of her.' What wonder if the poor idolatrous creatures had fallen down and worshipped the picture (just as millions do that of the Virgin Mary, without a thousandth part as sound and practical reason) as that of a divine, all-knowing, all-merciful deliverer? As for its being the picture of a beautiful woman or not, they would never think of that. The fair complexion and golden hair would be a sign to them that she belonged to the mighty white people, even if there were no bedizenment of jewels and crowns over and above; and that would be enough for them. When will biographers learn to do common justice to their fellow-men, by

exerting now and then some small amount of dramatic imagination, just sufficient to put themselves for a moment in the place of those of whom they write?

So ends his voyage: in which, he says, 'from myself I have deserved no thanks, for I am returned a beggar and withered. But I might have bettered my poor estate if I had not only respected her Majesty's future honour and riches. It became not the former fortune in which I once lived to go journeys of piccory,' (pillage;) 'and it had sorted ill with the offices of honour which, by her Majesty's grace, I hold this day in England, to run from cape to cape, and place to place, for the pillage of ordinary prizes.'

So speaks one whom it has been the fashion to consider as little better than a pirate, and that, too, in days when the noblest blood in England thought no shame (as indeed it was no shame) to enrich themselves with Spanish gold. But so it is throughout this man's life. If there be a nobler word than usual to be spoken, or a more wise word either, if there be a more chivalrous deed to be done, or a more prudent deed either, that word and that deed are pretty sure to be Walter Raleigh's.

But the blatant beast has been busy at home; and, in spite of Chapman's heroical verses, he meets with little but cold looks. Never mind. If the world will not help to do the deed, he will do it by himself; and no time must be lost, for the Spaniards on their part will lose none. So, after six months, the faithful Keymis sails again, again helped by the Lord High Admiral and Sir Robert Cecil. It is a hard race for one private man against the whole power and wealth of Spain; and the Spaniard has been beforehand with them, and re-occupied the country. They have fortified themselves at the mouth of the Caroli, so it is

impossible to get to the gold mines; they are enslaving the wretched Indians, carrying off their women, intending to transplant some tribes, and to expel others, and arming cannibal tribes against the inhabitants. All is misery and rapine; the scattered remnant comes asking piteously, why Ralcigh does not come over to deliver them? Have the Spaniards slain him, too? Keymis comforts them as he best can; hears of more gold mines, and gets back safe, a little to his own astonishment, for eight-and-twenty ships of war have been sent to Trinidad, to guard the entrance to El Dorado, not surely, as Keymis well says, 'to keep us only from tobacco.' A colony of 500 persons is expected from Spain. The Spaniard is well aware of the richness of the prize, says Keymis, who all through shows himself a worthy pupil of his master. A careful, observant man he seems to have been, trained by that great example to overlook no fact, even the smallest. He brings home lists of rivers, towns, caciques, poison-herbs, words, what not; he has fresh news of gold, spleen-stones, kidney-stones, and some fresh specimens: but be that as it may, he, 'without going as far as his eyes can warrant, can promise Brazil-wood, honey, cotton, balsamum, and drugs, to defray charges.' He would fain copy Raleigh's style, too, and, 'whence his lamp had oil, borrow light also,' 'seasoning his unsavoury speech' with some of the 'leaven of Raleigh's discourse.' Which, indeed, he does even to little pedantries and attempts at classicality, and after professing that 'himself and the remnant of his few years he hath bequeathed wholly to Raleana, and his thoughts live only in that action,' he rises into something like grandeur when he begins to speak of that ever-fertile subject, the Spanish cruelties to the Indians: 'Doth not the cry of the poor succourless ascend unto the

heavens? Hath God forgotten to be gracious to the work of his own hands? Or shall not his judgments in a day of visitation by the ministry of his chosen servant come upon these bloodthirsty butchers, like rain into a fleece of wool?' Poor Keymis! To us he is by no means the least beautiful figure in this romance; a faithful, diligent, loving man, unable, as the event proved, to do great deeds by himself, but inspired with a great idea by contact with a mightier spirit, to whom he clings through evil report, and poverty, and prison, and the scaffold, careless of self to the last, and ends tragically, 'faithful unto death' in the most awful sense.

But here remark two things: first, that Cecil believes in Raleigh's Guiana scheme; next, that the occupation of Orinoco by the Spaniards, which Raleigh is accused of having concealed from James in 1617, has been, ever since 1595, matter of the most public notoriety.

Raleigh has not been idle in the meanwhile. It has been found necessary after all to take the counsel which he gave in vain in 1588, to burn the Spanish fleet in harbour; and the heroes are gone down to Cadiz fight, and in one day of thunder storm the Sevastopol of Spain. Here, as usual, we find Raleigh, though in an inferior command, leading the whole by virtue of superior wisdom. When the good Lord Admiral will needs be cautious, and land the soldiers first, it is Raleigh who persuades him to force his way into the harbour, to the joy of all captains. When hot-headed Essex, casting his hat into the sea for joy, shouts 'Intramos,' and will in at once, Raleigh's time for caution comes, and he persuades them to wait till the next morning, and arrange the order of attack. That, too, Raleigh has to do, and moreover to lead it;

and lead it he does. Under the forts are seventeen galleys; the channel is 'scoured' with cannon: but on holds Raleigh's 'Warspite,' far ahead of the rest, through the thickest of the fire, answering forts and galleys 'with a blur of the trumpet to each piece, disdaining to shoot at those esteemed dreadful monsters.' For there is a nobler enemy ahead. Right in front lie the galleons; and among them the 'Philip' and the 'Andrew,' two of those who boarded the 'Revenge.' This day there shall be a reckoning for the blood of his old friend; he is 'resolved to be revenged for the 'Revenge,' Sir Richard Grenvile's fatal ship, or second her with his own life;' and well he keeps his vow. Three hours pass of desperate valour, during which, so narrow is the passage, only seven English ships, thrusting past each other, all but quarrelling in their noble rivalry, engage the whole Spanish fleet of fifty-seven sail, and destroy it utterly. The 'Philip' and 'Thomas,' burn themselves despairing. The English boats save the 'Andrew,' and 'Matthew.' One passes over the hideous record. 'If any man,' says Raleigh, 'had a desire to see hell itself, it was there most lively figured.' Keymis's prayer is answered in part, even while he writes it; and the cry of the Indians has not ascended in vain before the throne of God!

The soldiers are landed; the city stormed and sacked, not without mercies and courtesies, though, to women and unarmed folk, which win the hearts of the vanquished, and live till this day in well-known ballads. The Flemings begin a 'mercileſs slaughter.' Raleigh and the Lord Admiral beat them off. Raleigh is carried on shore with a splinter wound in the leg, which lames him for life: but returns on board in an hour in agony; for there is no admiral left to order the fleet, and all are run headlong to the sack. In

vain he attempts to get together sailors the following morning, and attack the Indian fleet in Porto Real Roads; within twenty-four hours it is burnt by the Spaniards themselves; and all Raleigh wins is no booty, a lame leg, and the honour of having been the real author of a victory even more glorious than that of 1588.

So he returns; having written to Cecil the highest praises of Essex, whom he treats with all courtesy and fairness; which those who will may call cunning: we have as good a right to say that he was returning good for evil. There were noble qualities in Essex. All the world gave him credit for them, and far more than he deserved; why should not Raleigh have been just to him; even have conceived, like the rest of the world, high hopes of him, till he himself destroyed these hopes? For now storms are rising fast. On their return Cecil is in power. He has been made Secretary of State instead of Bodley, Essex's pet, and the spoilt child begins to sulk. On which matter, I am sorry to say, Mr. Tytler and others talk much unwisdom, about Essex's being too 'open and generous, &c., for a courtier,' and 'presuming on his mistress's passion for him;' and represent Elizabeth as desiring to be thought beautiful, and 'affecting at sixty the sighs, loves, tears, and tastes of a girl of sixteen,'—and so forth. It is really time to get rid of some of this fulsome talk, culled from such triflers as Osborne, if not from the darker and fouler sources of Parsons and the Jesuit slanderers, which I meet with a flat denial. There is simply no proof. She in love with Essex or Cecil? Yes, as a mother with a son. Were they not the children of her dearest and most faithful servants, men who had lived heroic lives for her sake? What wonder if she fancied that she saw the fathers in the sons? They

had been trained under her eye. What wonder if she fancied that they could work as their fathers worked before them? And what shame if her childless heart yearned over them with unspeakable affection, and longed in her old age to lay her hands upon the shoulders of those two young men, and say to England, 'Behold the children which God, and not the flesh, has given me?' Most strange it is, too, that women, who ought at least to know a woman's heart, have been especially forward in publishing these stupid scandals, and sullying their pages by retailing prurient slander against such a one as Queen Elizabeth.

But to return. Raleigh attaches himself to Cecil; and he has good reason. Cecil is the cleverest man in England, saving himself. He has trusted and helped him, too, in two Guiana voyages; so the connexion is one of gratitude as well as prudence. We know not whether he helped him in the third Guiana voyage in the same year, under Captain Berry (a north Devon man, from Grenvile's country), who found a mighty folk, who were 'something pleasant, having drunk much that day,' and carried bows with golden handles; but failed in finding the Lake Parima, and so came home.

Raleigh's first use of his friendship with Cecil is to reconcile him, to the astonishment of the world, with Essex, alleging how much good may grow by it; for now 'the Queen's continual unquietness will grow to contentment.' That, too, those who will may call policy. We have as good a right to call it the act of a wise and faithful subject, and to say, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.' He has his reward for it, in full restoration to the Queen's favour; he deserves it. He proves himself once more worthy of power and it is given to him. Then there is to be a second great expedition; but this

time its aim is the Azores. Philip, only maddened by the loss at Cadiz, is preparing a third armament for the invasion of England and Ireland, and it is said to lie at the islands to protect the Indian fleet. Raleigh has the victualling of the land-forces, and like everything else he takes in hand, 'it is very well done.' Lord Howard declines the chief command, and it is given to Essex. Raleigh is to be rear-admiral.

By the time they reach the Azores, Essex has got up a foolish quarrel against Raleigh for disrespect in having stayed behind to bring up some stragglers. But when no armada is to be found at the Azores, Essex has after all to ask Raleigh what he shall do next. Conquer the Azores, says Raleigh, and the thing is agreed on. Raleigh and Essex are to attack Fayal. Essex sails away before Raleigh has watered. Raleigh follows as fast as he can, and at Fayal finds no Essex. He must water there, then and at once. His own veterans want him to attack forthwith, for the Spaniards are fortifying fast; but he will wait for Essex. Still no Essex comes. Raleigh attempts to water, is defied, finds himself 'in for it,' and takes the island out of hand in the most masterly fashion, to the infuriation of Essex. Good Lord Howard patches up the matter, and the hot-headed coxcomb is once more pacified. They go on to Graciosa, where Essex's weakness of will again comes out, and he does not take the island. Three rich Caracks, however, are picked up. 'Though we shall be little the better for them,' says Raleigh privately to Sir Arthur Gorges, his faithful captain, 'yet I am heartily glad for our General's sake; because they will in great measure give content to her Majesty, so that there may be no repining against this poor Lord for the expense of the voyage.'

Raleigh begins to see that Essex is only to be pitied,

that the voyage is not over likely to end well; but he takes it, in spite of ill-usage, as a kind-hearted man should. Again Essex makes a fool of himself. They are to steer one way in order to interrupt the Plate-fleet. Essex having agreed to the course pointed out, alters his course on a fancy; then alters it a second time, though the hapless Monson, with the whole Plate-fleet in sight, is hanging out lights, firing guns, and shrieking vainly for the General, who is gone on a new course, in which he might have caught the fleet after all, in spite of his two mistakes, but that he chooses to go a round-about way instead of a short one; and away goes the whole fleet safe, save one Carack, which runs itself on shore and burns, and the game is played out, and lost.

All want Essex to go home as the season is getting late: but the wilful and weak man will linger still, and while he is hovering to the south, Philip's armament has sailed from the Groyne, on the undefended shores of England, and only God's hand saves us from the effects of Essex's folly. A third time the armadas of Spain are overwhelmed by the avenging tempests, and Essex returns to disgrace, having proved himself at once intemperate and incapable. Even in coming home there is confusion, and Essex is all but lost on the Bishop and Clerks, by Scilly, in spite of the warnings of Raleigh's sailing-master 'Old Broadbent,' who is so exasperated at the general stupidity that he wants Raleigh to leave Essex and his squadron to get out of their own scrape as they can.

Essex goes off to sulk at Wanstead: but Vere excuses him, and in a few days he comes back, and will needs fight good Lord Howard for being made Earl of Nottingham for his services against the Armada and at Cadiz. Baulked of this, he begins laying the blame of

the failure at the Azores on Raleigh. Let the spoilt naughty boy take care; even that 'admirable temper' for which Raleigh is famed, may be worn out at last.

These years are Raleigh's noon—stormy enough at best, yet brilliant. There is a pomp about him, outward and inward, which is terrible to others, dangerous to himself. One has gorgeous glimpses of that grand Durham House of his, with its carvings and its antique marbles, armorial escutcheons, 'beds with green silk hangings, and legs like dolphins, overlaid with gold;' and the man himself, tall, beautiful, and graceful, perfect alike in body and in mind, walking to and fro, his beautiful wife upon his arm, his noble boy beside his knee, in his 'white satin doublet, embroidered with pearls, and a great chain of pearls about his neck,' lording it among the lords with 'an awfulness and ascendency above other mortals,' for which men say that 'his nævе is, that he is damnable proud;' and no wonder. The reduced squire's younger son has gone forth to conquer the world; and he fancies, poor fool, that he has conquered it, just as it really has conquered him; and he will stand now on his blood and his pedigree, (no bad one either,) and all the more stiffly because puppies like Lord Oxford, who instead of making their fortunes have squandered them, call him 'jack and upstart,' and make impertinent faces while the Queen is playing the virginals, about 'how when jacks go up, heads go down.' Proud? No wonder if the man be proud. 'Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?' And yet all the while he has the most affecting consciousness that all this is not God's will, but the will of the flesh; that the house of fame is not the house of God; that its floor is not the rock of ages, but the sea of glass mingled with fire, which may crack beneath him any moment, and let

the nether flame burst up. He knows that he is living in a splendid lie; that he is not what God meant him to be. He longs to flee away and be at peace. It is to this period, not to his death-hour, that 'The Lie' belongs;* saddest of poems, with its melodious contempt and life-weariness. All is a lie—court, church, statesmen, courtiers, wit and science, town and country, all are shams; the days are evil; the canker is at the root of all things; the old heroes are dying one by one; the Elizabethan age is rotting down, as all human things do, and nothing is left but to bewail with Spenser 'The Ruins of Time;' the glory and virtue which have been—the greater glory and virtue which might be even now, if men would but arise and repent, and work righteousness, as their fathers did before them. But no. Even to such a world as this he will cling, and flaunt it about as captain of the guard in the Queen's progresses and masques and pageants, with sword-belt studded with diamonds and rubies, or at tournaments, in armour of solid silver, and a gallant train with orange-tawny feathers, provoking puppy Essex to bring in a far larger train in the same colours, and swallow up Raleigh's pomp in his own, so achieving that famous 'feather-triumph' by which he gains little but bad blood and a good jest. For Essex is no better tilter than he is general; and having 'run very ill' in his orange-tawny, comes next day in green, and runs still worse, and yet is seen to be the same cavalier; whereon a spectator shrewdly observes, that he changed his colours 'that it may be reported that there was one in green who ran worse than he in orange-tawny.' But enough of these toys, while God's hand-writing is upon the wall above all heads.

* It is to be found in a MS. of 1596.

Ralcigh knows that the hand-writing is there. The spirit which drove him forth to Virginia and Guiana is fallcn asleep: but he longs for Sherborne and quiet country life, and escapes thither during Essex's imprisonment, taking Cecil's son with him, and writes as only he can write, about the shepherd's peaceful joys, contrasted with 'courts' and 'masques' and 'proud towers,'—

Here are no false entrapping baits
Too hasty for too hasty fates,
Unless it be
The fond credulity
Of silly fish, that worldling who still look
Upon the bait, but never on the hook;
Nor envy, unless among
The birds, for prize of their sweet song.

Go! let the diving negro seek
For pearls hid in some forlorn creek,
We all pearls scorn,
Save what the dewy morn
Congeals upon some little spire of grass,
Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass;
And gold ne'er here appears
Save what the yellow Ceres bears.

Tragic enough are the after scenes of Ralcigh's life; but most tragic of all are these scenes of vain-glory, in which he sees the better part, and yet chooses the worse, and pours out his self-discontent in song which proves the fount of delicacy and beauty which lies pure and bright beneath the gaudy artificial crust. What might not this man have been! And he knows that too. The stately rooms of Durham House pall on him, and he delights to hide up in his little study among his books and his chemical experiments, and smoke his silver pipe, and look out on the clear Thames and the green Surrey hills, and dream about Guiana and the Tropics; or to sit in the society of antiquaries with Selden and Cotton, Camden and Stow; or in his own

Mermaid Club, with Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont, and at last with Shakspeare's self, to hear and utter

> 'Words that have been
> So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
> As if that every one from whom they came,
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest.'

Anything to forget the hand-writing on the wall, which will not be forgotten.

But he will do all the good which he can meanwhile, nevertheless. He will serve God and Mammon. So complete a man will surely be able to do both. Unfortunately the thing is impossible, as he discovers too late; but he certainly goes as near success in the attempt as ever man did. Everywhere we find him doing justly and loving mercy. Wherever this man steps he leaves his foot-print ineffaceably in deeds of benevolence. For one year only, it seems, he is governor of Jersey: yet to this day, it is said, the islanders honour his name, only second to that of Duke Rollo, as their great benefactor, the founder of their Newfoundland trade. In the west country he is 'as a king,' 'with ears and mouth always open to hear and deliver their grievances, feet and hands ready to go and work their redress.' The tin merchants have become usurers 'of fifty in the hundred.' Raleigh works till he has put down their 'abominable and cut-throat dealing.' There is a burdensome west-country tax on curing fish; Raleigh works till it is revoked. In parliament he is busy with liberal measures, always before his generation. He puts down a foolish act for compulsory sowing of hemp, in a speech on the freedom of labour worthy of the nineteenth century. He argues against raising the subsidy from the three pound men —'Call you this, Mr. Francis Bacon, par jugum,

when a poor man pays as much as a rich?' He is equally rational and spirited against the exportation of ordnance to the enemy; and when the question of abolishing monopolies is mooted he has his wise word. He too is a monopolist of tin, as Lord Warden of the Stannaries. But he has so wrought as to bring good out of evil; for 'before the granting of his patent, let the price of tin be never so high, the poor workman never had but two shillings a week;' yet now, 'so has he extended and organized the tin-works, that any man who will can find work, be tin at what price soever, have four shillings a week truly paid. . . . Yet if all others may be repealed, I will give my consent as freely to the cancelling of this, as any member of this house.' Most of the monopolies were repealed: but we do not find that Raleigh's was among them. Why should it be if its issue was more tin, and full work, and double wages? In all things this man approves himself faithful in his generation. His sins are not against man, but against God; such as the world thinks no sins; and hates them, not from morality, but from envy.

In the meanwhile, the evil which, so Spenser had prophesied, only waited Raleigh's death, breaks out in his absence, and Ireland is all aflame with Tyrone's rebellion. Raleigh is sent for. He will not accept the post of Lord Deputy, and go to put it down. Perhaps he does not expect fair play as long as Essex is at home. Perhaps he knows too much of the 'common weal, or rather common woe,' and thinks that what is crooked cannot be made straight. Perhaps he is afraid to lose by absence his ground at court. Would that he had gone, for Ireland's sake and his own. However, it must not be. Ormond is recalled, and Knolles

shall be sent; but Essex will have none but Sir George Carew; whom, Naunton says, he hates, and wishes to oust from court. He and Elizabeth argue it out. He turns his back on her, and she gives him (or does not give him, for one has found so many of these racy anecdotes vanish on inspection into simple wind, that one believes none of them) a box on the ear; which if she did, she did the most wise, just, and practical thing which she could do with such a puppy. He claps his hand (or does not) to his sword—'He would not have taken it from Henry VIII.,' and is turned out forthwith. In vain Egerton, the lord keeper, tries to bring him to reason. He storms insanely. Every one on earth is wrong but he; every one is conspiring against him; he talks of 'Solomon's fool' too. Had he read the Proverbs a little more closely, he might have left the said fool alone, as being a too painfully exact likeness of himself. It ends by his being worsted, and Raleigh rising higher than ever. I cannot see why Raleigh should be represented as henceforth becoming Essex 'avowed enemy,' save on the ground that all good men are and ought to be the enemies of bad men, when they see them about to do harm, and to ruin the country. Essex is one of the many persons upon whom this age has lavished a quantity of maudlin sentimentality, which suits oddly enough with its professions of impartiality. But there is an impartiality which ends in utter injustice; which by saying carelessly to every quarrel, 'Both are right, and both are wrong,' leaves only the impression that all men are wrong, and ends by being unjust to every one. So has Elizabeth and Essex's quarrel been treated. There was some evil in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was a fool for liking him. There was some good in Essex; therefore Elizabeth was cruel in punishing him. This is the sort

of slipshod dilemma by which Elizabeth is proved to be wrong, even while Essex is confessed to be wrong too; while the patent facts of the case are, that Elizabeth bore with him as long as she could, and a great deal longer than any one else could. Why Raleigh should be accused of helping to send Essex into Ireland, I do not know. Camden confesses (at the same time that he gives a hint of the kind) that Essex would let no one go but himself. And if this was his humour, one can hardly wonder at Cecil and Raleigh, as well as Elizabeth, bidding the man begone and try his hand at government, and be filled with the fruit of his own devices. He goes; does nothing; or rather worse than nothing; for in addition to the notorious ill-management of the whole matter, we may fairly say that he killed Elizabeth. She never held up her head again after Tyrone's rebellion. Elizabeth still clings to him, changing her mind about him every hour, and at last writes him such a letter as he deserves. He has had power, money, men, such as no one ever had before, why has he done nothing but bring England to shame? He comes home frantically (the story of his bursting into the dressing-room rests on no good authority) with a party of friends at his heels, leaving Ireland to take care of itself. Whatever entertainment he met with from the fond old woman, he met with the coldness which he deserved from Raleigh and Cecil. Who can wonder? What had he done to deserve aught else? But he all but conquers; and Raleigh takes to his bed in consequence, sick of the whole matter; as one would have been inclined to do oneself. He is examined and arraigned; writes a maudlin letter to Elizabeth, of which Mr. Tytler says, that it 'says little for the heart which could resist it;' another instance of the strange self-contradictions into which his brains will run. In one

page, forsooth, Elizabeth is a fool for listening to these pathetical 'love letters;' in the next page she is hard-hearted for not listening to them. Poor thing! Do what she would she found it hard enough to please all parties while alive; must she be condemned over and above in æternum to be wrong whatsoever she does? Why is she not to have the benefit of the plain, straightforward interpretation which would be allowed to any other human being, namely, that she approved of such fine talk, as long as it was proved to be sincere by fine deeds; but that when these were wanting, the fine talk became hollow, fulsome, a fresh cause of anger and disgust? Yet still she weeps over him when he falls sick, as any mother would; and would visit him if she could with honour. But a 'malignant influence counteracts every disposition to relent.' No doubt, a man's own folly, passion, and insolence, has generally a very malignant influence on his fortunes, and he may consider himself a very happy man if all that befalls to him thereby is what befel Essex, deprivation of his offices, and imprisonment in his own house. He is forgiven after all; but the spoilt child refuses his bread and butter without sugar. What is the pardon to him without a renewal of his license of sweet wines? Because he is not to have that, the Queen's 'conditions are as crooked as her carcase.' Flesh and blood can stand no more, and ought to stand no more. After all that Elizabeth has been to him, that speech is the speech of a brutal and ungrateful nature. And such he shows himself to be in the hour of trial. What if the patent for sweet wines is refused him? Such gifts were meant as the reward of merit; and what merit has he to show? He never thinks of that. Blind with fury he begins to intrigue with James, and slanders to him, under colour of helping his succession, all

whom he fancies opposed to him. What is worse, he intrigues with Tyrone about bringing over an army of Irish Papists to help him against the Queen, and this at the very time that his sole claim to popularity rests on his being the leader of the Puritans. A man must have been very far gone, either in baseness or in blind fury, who represents Raleigh to James as dangerous to the commonweal, on account of his great power in the west of England and Jersey, 'places fit for the Spaniard to land in.' Cobham, as warden of the Cinque ports, is included in his slander; and both he and Raleigh will hear of it again.

Some make much of a letter, supposed to be written about this time by Raleigh to Cecil, bidding Cecil keep down Essex, even crush him, now that he is once down. I do not happen to think the letter to be Raleigh's. His initials are subscribed to it; but not his name; and the style is not like his. But as for seeing 'unforgiveness and revenge in it,' whose soever it may be, I hold and say there is not a word which can bear such a construction. It is a dark letter: but about a dark matter, and a dark man. It is a worldly and expedient letter, appealing to low motives in Cecil, though for a right end; such a letter, in short, as statesmen are wont to write now-a-days. If Raleigh wrote it, God punished him for doing so speedily enough. He does not usually punish statesmen now-a-days for such letters; perhaps because He does not love them as well as Raleigh. But as for the letter itself. Essex is called a 'tyrant,' because he had shown himself one. The Queen is to 'hold Bothwell,' because 'while she hath him, he will even be the canker of her estate and safety,' and the writer has 'seen the last of her good days, and of ours after his liberty.' On which accounts, Cecil is not to be deterred from doing

what is right and necessary 'by any fear of after-revenges,' and 'conjectures from causes remote,' as many a stronger instance (given) will prove, but 'look to the present,' and so 'do wisely.' There is no real cause for Cecil's fear. If the man who has now lost a power which he ought never to have had, be now kept down, neither he nor his son will ever be able to harm the man who has kept him at his just level. What 'revenge, selfishness, and craft' there can be in all this, it is difficult to see; as difficult as to see why Essex is to be talked of as 'unfortunate,' and the blame of his frightful end thrown on every one but himself: or why Mr. Tytler finds it unnecessary to pursue his 'well-known story further,' after having proved Raleigh to be all on a sudden turned into a fiend: unless, indeed, it was inconvenient to bring before the reader's mind the curious and now forgotten fact, that Essex's end was brought on by his having chosen one Sunday morning for breaking out into open rebellion, for the purpose of seizing the city of London and the Queen's person, and compelling her to make him lord and master of the British isles; in which attempt he and his fought with the civil and military authorities, till artillery had to be brought up, and many lives were lost. Such little escapades may be pardonable enough in 'noble and unfortunate' earls: but our readers will perhaps agree that if they chose to try a similar experiment, they could not complain if they found themselves shortly after in company with Mr. Mitchell at Spike Island, or Mr. Oxford in Bedlam. But those were days in which such Sabbath amusements on the part of one of the most important and powerful personages of the realm could not be passed over so lightly, especially when accompanied by severe loss of life; and as there existed in England certain statutes con-

cerning rebellion and high treason, which must needs have been framed for some purpose or other, the authorities of England may be excused for fancying that they bore some reference to such acts as that which the noble and unfortunate earl had just committed, as wantonly, selfishly, and needlessly, it seems to me, as ever did man on earth.

I may seem to jest too much upon so solemn a matter as the life of a human being: but if I am not to touch the popular talk about Essex in this tone, I can only touch it in a far sterner one; and if ridicule is forbidden, express disgust instead.

I have entered into this matter of Essex somewhat at length, because on it is founded one of the mean slanders from which Raleigh never completely recovered. The very mob who, after Raleigh's death, made him a Protestant martyr (as, indeed, he was), looked upon Essex in the same light, hated Raleigh as the cause of his death, and accused him of glutting his eyes with Essex's misery, puffing tobacco out of a window, and what not—all mere inventions, as Raleigh declared upon the scaffold. He was there in his office, as captain of the guard, and could do no less than be there. Essex, it is said, asked for Raleigh just before he died: but Raleigh had withdrawn, the mob having murmured. What had Essex to say to him? Was it, asks Oldys, shrewdly enough, to ask him pardon for the wicked slanders which he had been pouring into James's credulous and cowardly ears? We will hope so, and leave poor Essex to God and the mercy of God, asserting once more, that no man ever brought ruin and death more thoroughly on himself by his own act, needing no imaginary help downwards from Raleigh, Cecil, or other human being.

And now begins the fourth act of this strange tra-

gedy. Queen Elizabeth dies; and dies of grief. It has been the fashion to attribute to her, I know not why, remorse for Essex's death; and the foolish and false tale about Lady Nottingham and the ring has been accepted as history. The fact seems to be that she never really held up her head after Burleigh's death. She could not speak of him without tears; forbade his name to be mentioned in the Council. No wonder; never had mistress a better servant. For nearly half a century have these two noble souls loved each other, trusted each other, worked with each other; and God's blessing has been on their deeds; and now the faithful God-fearing man is gone to his reward; and she is growing old, and knows that the ancient fire is dying out in her; and who will be to her what he was? Buckhurst is a good man, and one of her old pupils; and she makes him Lord Treasurer in Burleigh's place: but beyond that, all is dark. 'I am a miserable forlorn woman; there is none about me that I can trust.' She sees through false Cecil; through false Henry Howard. Essex has proved himself worthless, and pays the penalty of his sins. Men are growing worse than their fathers. Spanish gold is bringing in luxury and sin. The last ten years of her reign are years of decadence, profligacy, falsehood; and she cannot but see it. Tyrone's rebellion is the last drop which fills the cup. After fifty years of war, after a drain of money all but fabulous, expended on keeping Ireland quiet, the volcano bursts forth again just as it seemed extinguished, more fiercely than ever, and the whole work has to be done over again, when there is neither time, nor a man, to do it. And ahead, what hope is there for England? Who will be her successor? She knows in her heart that it will be James: but she cannot bring herself to name him. To bequeath the

fruit of all her labours to a tyrant, a liar, and a coward! (for she knows the man but too well.) It is too hideous to be faced. This is the end, then? 'Oh that I were a milke maide, with a paile upon mine arm!' But it cannot be. It never could have been; and she must endure to the end.

'Therefore I hated life; yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; because I should leave it to the man that shall be after me. And who knows whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have shewed myself wise, in wisdom, and knowledge, and equity. . . . Vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit!' And so, with a whole book of Ecclesiastes written on that mighty heart, the old lioness coils herself up in her lair, refuses food, and dies. We know few passages in the world's history so tragic as that death.

Why did she not trust Raleigh? First, because Raleigh (as we have seen) was not the sort of man whom she needed. He was not the steadfast single-eyed statesman; but the many-sided genius. Besides, he was the ringleader of the war-party. And she, like Burleigh before his death, was tired of the war; saw that it was demoralizing England; was anxious for peace. Raleigh would not see that. It was to him a divine mission which must be fulfilled at all risks. As long as the Spaniards were opposing the Indians, conquering America, there must be no peace. Both were right from their own point of view. God ordered the matter from a third point of view; for His wrath was gone out against this people.

Beside, we know that Essex, and after him Cecil and Henry Howard, had been slandering Raleigh basely to James. Can we doubt that the same poison had

been poured into Elizabeth's ears? She might distrust Cecil too much to act upon what he said of Raleigh; and yet distrust Raleigh too much to put the kingdom into his hands. However, she is gone now, and a new king has arisen, who knoweth not Joseph.

James comes down to take possession. Insolence, luxury, and lawlessness mark his first steps on his going amid the adulations of a fallen people; he hangs a poor wretch without trial; wastes his time in hunting by the way;—a bad and base man, whose only redeeming point (if in his case it be one) is his fondness for little children. But that will not make a king. The wise elders take counsel together. Raleigh and good Judge Forteseue are for requiring conditions from the new comer, and constitutional liberty makes its last stand among the men of Devon, the old county of warriors, discoverers, and statesmen, of which Queen Bess had said, that the men of Devon were her right hand. But in vain; James has his way; Cecil and Henry Howard are willing enough to give it him. Let their memory be accursed; for never did two bad men more deliberately betray the freedom of their country. So down comes Rehoboam, taking counsel with the young men, and makes answer to England, 'My father chastised you with whips; but I will chastise you with scorpions.' He takes a base pleasure, shocking to the French ambassador, in sneering at the memory of Queen Elizabeth; a perverse delight in honouring every rascal whom she had punished. Tyrone must come to England to be received into favour, maddening the soul of honest Sir John Harrington. Essex is christened 'my martyr,' apparently for having plotted treason against Elizabeth with Tyrone. Raleigh is received with a pun—'By my soul, I have heard rawly of thee, mon;' and when the great nobles and gentlemen come

to court with their retinues, James tries to hide his dread of them in an insult; pooh poohs their splendour, and says, 'he doubts not that he should have been able to win England for himself, had they kept him out.' Raleigh answers boldly, 'Would God that had been put to the trial.' 'Why?' 'Because then you would have known your friends from your foes.' 'A reason' (says old Aubrey) 'never forgotten or forgiven.' Aubrey is no great authority; but the speech smacks so of Raleigh's offhand daring, that one cannot but believe it, as one does also the other story of his having advised the lords to keep out James and erect a republic. Not that he could have been silly enough to propose such a thing seriously at that moment; but that he most likely, in his bold way, may have said, 'Well, if we are to have this man in without conditions, better a republic at once.' Which, if he did say, he said what the next forty years proved to be strictly true. However, he will go on his own way as best he can. If James will give him a loan, he and the rest of the old heroes will join, fit out a fleet against Spain, and crush her, now that she is tottering and impoverished, once and for ever. Alas! James has no stomach for fighting, cannot abide the sight of a drawn sword—would not provoke Spain for the world—why, they might send Jesuits and assassinate him; and as for the money, he wants that for very different purposes. So the answer which he makes to Raleigh's proposal of war against Spain, is to send him to the Tower, and sentence him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, on a charge of plotting with Spain.

Having read, I believe, nearly all that has been written on the subject of this dark 'Cobham plot,' I find but one thing come brightly out of the infinite confusion and mystery, which will never be cleared up

till the day of judgment, and that is Raleigh's innocence. He, and all England, and the very man who condemned him, knew that he was innocent. Every biographer is forced to confess this, more or less, in spite of all efforts to be what is called 'impartial.' So I shall waste no words upon the matter, only observing, that whereas Raleigh is said to have slandered Cecil to James, in the same way that Cecil had slandered him, one passage of this Cobham plot disproves utterly such a story, which after all, rests (as far as I know) only on hearsay, being 'spoken of in a manuscript written by one Buck, secretary to Chancellor Egerton.' For in writing to his own wife, in the expectation of immediate death, Raleigh speaks of Cecil in a very different tone, as one in whom he trusted most, and who has left him in the hour of need. I ask the reader to peruse that letter, and say whether any man would write thus, with death and judgment before his face, of one whom he knew that he had betrayed; or, indeed, of one who he knew had betrayed him. We see no reason to doubt that Raleigh kept good faith with Cecil, and that he was ignorant till after his trial that Cecil was the manager of the whole plot against him, and as accomplished a villain as one meets with in history.

I do not care to enter into the tracasseries of this Cobham plot. Every one knows them; no one can unravel them. The moral and spiritual significance of the fact is more interesting than all questions as to Cobham's lies, Brooke's lies, Aremberg's lies, Coke's lies, James's lies:—Let the dead bury their dead. It is the broad aspect of the thing which is so wonderful; to see how

> The eagle, towering in his pride of place,
> Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

This is the man who six months ago, perhaps, thought that he and Cecil were to rule England together, while all else were the puppets whose wires they pulled. 'The Lord hath taken him up, and dashed him down;' and by such means, too, and on such a charge! Betraying his country to Spain! Absurd—incredible—He would laugh it to scorn; but it is bitter earnest. There is no escape. True or false, he sees that his enemies will have his head. It is maddening; a horrible nightmare. He cannot bear it; he cannot face (so he writes to that beloved wife) 'the scorn, the taunts, the loss of honour, the cruel words of lawyers.' He stabs himself. Read that letter of his, written after the mad blow had been struck; it is sublime from intensity of agony. The way in which the chastisement was taken proves how utterly it was needed, ere that proud, success-swollen, world-entangled heart could be brought right with God.

And it is brought right. The wound is not mortal. He comes slowly to a better mind, and takes his doom like a man. That first farewell to his wife was written out of hell. The second rather out of heaven. Read it, too, and compare; and then see how the Lord has been working upon this great soul: infinite sadness, infinite tenderness and patience, and trust in God for himself and his poor wife: 'God is my witness, it was for you and yours that I desired life; but it is true that I disdain myself for begging it. For know, dear wife, that your son is the son of a true man, and one who, in his own respect, despiseth death and all his ugly and misshapen forms. . . . The everlasting, powerful, infinite, and omnipotent God, who is goodness itself, the true life and light, keep thee and thine, have mercy upon me, and teach me to forgive my persecutors and accusers, and send us to meet in his glorious kingdom.'

Is it come to this, then? Is he fit to die, at last? Then he is fit to live; and live he shall. The tyrants have not the heart to carry out their own crime, and Raleigh shall be respited.

But not pardoned. No more return for him into that sinful world, where he flaunted on the edge of the precipice, and dropped heedless over it. God will hide him in the secret place of His presence, and keep him in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues; and a new life shall begin for him; a wiser, perhaps a happier, than he has known since he was a little lad in the farm-house in pleasant Devon far away. On the 15th of December he enters the Tower. Little dreams he that for more than twelve years those doleful walls would be his home. Lady Raleigh obtains leave to share his prison with him, and, after having passed ten years without a child, brings him a boy to comfort the weary heart. The child of sorrow is christened Carew. Little think those around him what strange things that child will see before his hairs be grey. She has her maid, and he his three servants; some five or six friends are allowed 'to repair to him at convenient times.' He has a chamber-door always open into the lieutenant's garden, where he 'has converted a little hen-house into a still-room, and spends his time all the day in distillation.' The next spring a grant is made of his goods and chattels, forfeited by attainder, to trustees named by himself, for the benefit of his family. So far, so well; or, at least, not as ill as it might be: but there are those who cannot leave the caged lion in peace.

Sanderson, who had married his niece, instead of paying up the arrears which he owes on the wine and other offices, brings in a claim of 2000*l.* But the rogue meets his match, and finds himself, at the end of a lawsuit, in prison for debt. Greater rogues, however, will have better fortune, and break through the

law-cobwebs which have stopped a poor little fly like Sanderson. For Carr, afterwards Lord Somerset, casts his eyes on the Sherborne land. It has been included in the conveyance, and should be safe; but there are others who, by instigation surely of the devil himself, have had eyes to see a flaw in the deed. Sir John Popham is appealed to. Who could doubt the result? He answers, that there is no doubt that the words were omitted by the inattention of the engrosser—(Carew Raleigh says that but one single word was wanting, which word was found notwithstanding in the paper-book, *i.e.*, the draft;) but that the word not being there, the deed is worthless, and the devil may have his way. To Carr, who has nothing of his own, it seems reasonable enough to help himself to what belongs to others; and James gives him the land. Raleigh writes to him, gently, gracefully, loftily. Here is an extract: 'And for yourself, sir, seeing your fair day is now in the dawn, and mine drawn to the evening, your own virtues and the king's grace assuring you of many favours and much honour, I beseech you not to begin your first building upon the ruins of the innocent; and that their sorrows, with mine, may not attend your first plantation.' He speaks strongly of the fairness, sympathy, and pity, by which the Scots in general had laid him under obligation; argues from it his own evident innocence; and ends with a quiet warning to the young favourite, not to 'undergo the curse of them that enter into the fields of the fatherless.' In vain. Lady Raleigh, with her children, entreats James, on her knees: in vain, again. 'I mun ha' the land,' is the answer; 'I mun ha' it for Carr.' And he has it; patching up the matter after awhile by a gift of 8000*l.* to her and her elder son, in requital for an estate of 5000*l.* a-year.

So there sits Raleigh, growing poorer day by day,

and clinging more and more to that fair wife, and her noble boy, and the babe whose laughter makes music within that dreary cage. And all day long, as we have seen, he sits over his still, compounding and discovering, and sometimes showing himself on the wall to the people, who gather to gaze at him, till Wade forbids it, fearing popular feeling. In fact, the world outside has a sort of mysterious awe of him, as if he were a chained magician, who, if he were let loose, might do with them all what he would. Salisbury and Somerset are of the same mind. Woe to them if that silver tongue should once again be unlocked!

The Queen, with a woman's faith in greatness, sends to him for 'cordials.' Here is one of them, famous in Charles the Second's days as 'Sir Walter's Cordial:'—

℞ Zedoary and saffron, each	½ lb.
Distilled water	3 pints.
Macerate, &c., and reduce to 1½ pint.	
Compound powder of crabs' claws	16 oz.
Cinnamon and Nutmegs	2 „
Cloves	1 „
Cardamom seeds	½ „
Double refined sugar	2 lb.
Make a confection.	

Which, so the world believes, will cure all ills which flesh is heir to. It does not seem that Raleigh so boasted himself; but the people, after the fashion of the time, seem to have called all his medicines 'cordials,' and probably took for granted that it was by this particular one that the enchanter cured Queen Anne of a desperate sickness, 'whereof the physicians were at the farthest end of their studies' (no great way to go in those days) 'to find the cause, and at a nonplus for the cure.'

Raleigh (this is Sir Anthony Welden's account) asks

for his reward, only justice. Will the Queen ask that certain lords may be sent to examine Cobham, 'whether he had at any time accused Sir Walter of any treason under his hand?' Six are sent; Salisbury among them. Cobham answers, 'Never; nor could I: that villain Wade often solicited me, and not so prevailing, got me by a trick to write my name on a piece of white paper. So that if a charge came under my hand, it was forged by that villain Wade, by writing something above my hand, without my consent or knowledge.' They return. Salisbury acts as spokesman; and has his equivocation ready. 'Sir, my Lord Cobham has made good all that ever he wrote or said;' having, by his own account, written nothing but his name. This is Sir Anthony Welden's story. One hopes, for the six lords' sake, it may not be true; but there is no reason, in the morality of James's court, why it should not have been.

So Raleigh must remain where he is, and work on. And he does work. As his captivity becomes more and more hopeless, so comes out more and more the stateliness, self-help, and energy of the man. Till now he has played with his pen: now he will use it in earnest; and use it as perhaps no prisoner ever did. Many a good book has been written in a dungeon. 'Don Quixote,' the 'Pilgrim's Progress:' beautiful each in its way, and destined to immortality: Raleigh begins the 'History of the World,' the most God-fearing and God-seeing history which I know of among human writings; though blotted by flattery of James in the preface: wrong: but pardonable in a man trying in the Tower to get out of that doleful prison. But all his writings are thirty years too late; they express the creed of a buried generation, of the men who defied Spain in the name of a God of righteousness,—not of

men who cringe before her in the name of a God of power and cunning. The captive eagle has written with a quill from his own wing—a quill which has been wont ere now to soar to heaven. Every line smacks of the memories of Nombre and of Zutphen, of Tilbury Fort and of Calais Roads; and many a grey-headed veteran, as he read them, must have turned away his face to hide the noble tears, as Ulysses from Demodocus when he sang the song of Troy. So there sits Ralegh, like the prophet of old, in his lonely tower above the Thames, watching the darkness gather upon the land year by year, 'like the morning spread over the mountains,' the darkness which comes before the dawn of the Day of The Lord; which he shall never see on earth, though it be very near at hand; and asks of each new-comer, 'Watchman, what of the night?'

But there is one bright point at least in the darkness; one on whom Raleigh's eyes, and those of all England, are fixed in boundless hope; one who, by the sympathy which attracts all noble natures to each other, clings to the hero utterly; Henry, the Crown Prince. 'No king but my father would keep such a bird in a cage.' The noble lad tries to open the door for the captive eagle; but in vain. At least he will make what use he can of his wisdom. He asks him for advice about the new ship he is building, and has a simple practical letter in return, and over and above probably the two valuable pamphlets, 'Of the Invention of Ships,' and 'Observations on the Navy and Sea Service;' which the Prince will never see. In 1611 he asks Raleigh's advice about the foolish double marriage with the Prince and Princess of Savoy, and receives for answer two plain-spoken discourses as full of historical learning as of practical sound sense.

These are benefits which must be repaid. The

father will repay them hereafter in his own way. In the meanwhile the son does so in his way, by soliciting the Sherborne estate as for himself, intending to restore it to Raleigh. He succeeds. Carr is bought off for 25,000*l.*, where Lady Raleigh had been bought off with 8000*l.*; but neither Raleigh nor his widow will ever be the better for that bargain, and Carr will get Sherborne back again, and probably, in the king's silly dotage, keep the 25,000*l.* also.

For, as we said, the Day of The Lord is at hand; and he whose virtues might have postponed it must be taken away, that vengeance may fall where vengeance is due, and men may know that verily there is a God who judgeth the earth.

In November, 1612, Prince Henry falls sick.

When he is at the last gasp, the poor Queen sends to Raleigh for some of the same cordial which had cured her. Medicine is sent, with a tender letter, as it well might be; for Raleigh knew how much hung, not only for himself, but for England, on the cracking threads of that fair young life. It is questioned at first whether it shall be administered. 'The cordial,' Raleigh says, 'will cure him or any other of a fever, except in case of poison.'

The cordial is administered: but it comes too late. The prince dies, and with him the hopes of all good men.

* * * * *

At last, after twelve years of prison, Raleigh is free. He is sixty-six years old now, grey-headed and worn down by confinement, study, and want of exercise: but he will not remember that.

> Still in his ashes live their wonted fire.

Now for Guiana, at last! which he has never forgotten; to which he has been sending, with his

slender means, ship after ship to keep the Indians in hope.

He is freed in March. At once he is busy at his project. In August he has obtained the King's commission, by the help of Sir Ralph Winwood, Secretary of State, who seems to have believed in Raleigh. At least Raleigh believed in him. In March next year he has sailed, and with him thirteen ships, and more than a hundred knights and gentlemen, and among them, strange to say, Sir Warham St. Leger. This can hardly be the quondam Marshal of Munster, under whom Raleigh served at Smerwick, six-and-thirty years ago. He would be nearly eighty years old; and as Lord Donerailc's pedigree gives three Sir Warhams, we cannot identify the man. But it is a strong argument in Raleigh's favour that a St. Leger, of a Devon family, which had been serving with him in Ireland, and intimately connected with him his whole life, should keep his faith in Raleigh after all his reverses. Nevertheless, the mere fact of an unpardoned criminal, said to be 'non ens' in law, being able in a few months to gather round him such a party, is proof patent of what slender grounds there are for calling Raleigh 'suspected' and 'unpopular.'

But he does not sail without a struggle or two. James is too proud to allow his heir to match with any but a mighty king, is infatuated about the Spanish marriage; and Gondomar is with him, playing with his hopes and with his fears also.

The people are furious; and have to be silenced again and again; there is even fear of rioting. The charming and smooth-tongued Gondomar can hate; and can revenge, too. Five 'prentices, who have insulted him for striking a little child, are imprisoned and fined several hundred pounds each. And as for hating Raleigh, Gondomar had been no Spaniard (to

let alone the private reasons which some have supposed) had he not hated Spain's ancient scourge and unswerving enemy. He comes to James, complaining that Raleigh is about to break the peace with Spain. Nothing is to be refused him which can further the one darling fancy of James; and Raleigh has to give in writing the number of his ships, men, and ordnance, and, moreover, the name of the country and the very river whither he is going. This paper was given, Carew Raleigh asserts positively, under James's solemn promise not to reveal it; and Raleigh himself seems to have believed that it was to be kept private; for he writes afterwards to Secretary Winwood in a tone of astonishment and indignation, that the information contained in his paper had been sent on to the King of Spain, before he sailed from the Thames. Winwood could have told him as much already; for Buckingham had written to Winwood, on March 28, to ask him why he had not been to the Spanish Ambassador 'to acquaint him with the order taken by his Majesty about Sir W. R.'s voyage.' But however unwilling the Secretary (as one of the furtherers of the voyage) may have been to meddle in the matter, Gondomar had had news enough from another source; perhaps from James's own mouth. For the first letter to the West Indies, about Raleigh, was dated from Madrid, March 19; and most remarkable it is, that in James's 'Declaration,' or rather apology, for his own conduct, no mention whatsoever is made of his having given information to Gondomar.

Gondomar offered, says James, to let Raleigh go with one or two ships only. He might work a mine, and that the King of Spain should give him a safe convoy home with all his gold. How kind! And how likely would Raleigh and his fellow-adventurers

have been to accept such an offer; how likely, too, to find men who would sail with them on such an errand, to be 'flayed alive,' as many who travelled to the Indies of late years had been, or to have their throats cut, tied back to back, after trading unarmed and peaceably for a month, as thirty-six of Raleigh's men had been but two or three years before in that very Orinoco. So James is forced to let the large fleet go; and to let it go well armed also; for the plain reason, that otherwise it dare not go at all; and in the meanwhile, letters are sent from Spain, in which the Spaniards call the fleet 'English enemies,' and ships and troops are moved up as fast as possible from the Spanish main.

But, say some, James was as much justified in telling Gondomar, and the Spaniards in defending themselves. On the latter point there is no doubt.

> They may get who have the will,
> And they may keep who can.

But it does seem hard on Ralegh, after having laboured in this Guiana business for years; after having spent his money in vain attempts to deliver these Guianians from their oppressors. It is hard, and he feels it so. He sees that he is not trusted; that, as James himself confesses, his pardon is refused simply to keep a hold on him; that, if he fails, he is ruined.

As he well asks afterward, 'If the king did not think that Guiana was his, why let me go thither at all? He knows that it was his by the law of nations, for he made Mr. Harcourt a grant of part of it. If it be, as Gondomar says, the King of Spain's, then I had no more right to work a mine in it than to burn a town.' Argument which seems to me unanswerable. But, says James, and others with him, he was forbid to meddle with any country occupate or possessed by

Spaniards. Southey, too, blames him severely for not having told James that the country was already settled by Spaniards. I can excuse Southey, but not James, for overlooking the broad fact, that all England knew it, as I have shown, since 1594; that if they did not, Gondomar would have taken care to tell them; and that he could not go to Guiana without meddling with Spaniards. His former voyages and publications made no secret of it. On the contrary, one chief argument for the plan had been all through the delivery of the Indians from these very Spaniards, who, though they could not conquer them, ill used them in every way: and in his agreement with the Lords about the Guiana voyage in 1611, he makes especial mention of the very place, which will soon fill such a part in our story, 'San Thomé, where the Spaniards inhabit,' and tells the Lords whom to ask, as to the number of men who will be wanted 'to secure Keymish's passage to the mine' against these very Spaniards. What can be more clear, save to those who will not see?

The plain fact is, that Raleigh went, with his eyes open, to take possession of a country to which he believed that he and King James had a right, and that James and his favourites, when they, as he pleads, might have stopped him by a word, let him go, knowing as well as the Spaniards what he intended; for what purpose, but to have an excuse for the tragedy which ended all, it is difficult to conceive. 'It is evident,' wisely says Sir Robert Schomburgk, 'that they winked at consequences which they must have foreseen.'

And here Mr. Napier, on the authority of Count Desmarets, brings a grave charge against Raleigh. Raleigh, in his apology, protests that he only saw Desmarets once on board of his vessel. Desmarets says in his despatches, that he was on board of her

several times (whether he saw Raleigh or not more than once does not appear), and that Raleigh complained to him of having been unjustly imprisoned, stripped of his estate, and so forth (which, indeed, was true enough), and that he was on that account resolved to abandon his country, and, if the expedition succeeded, offer himself and the fruit of his labour to the King of France.

If this be true, Raleigh was very wrong. But Sir Robert Schomburgk points out that this passage, which Mr. Napier says occurs in the last despatch, was written a month after Raleigh had sailed; and that the previous despatch, written only four days after Raleigh sailed, says nothing about the matter. So that it could not have been a very important or fixed resolution on Raleigh's part, if it was only to be recollected a month after. I do not say (as Sir Robert Schomburgk is very much inclined to do) that it was altogether a bubble of French fancy. It is probable and natural enough that Raleigh, in his just rage at finding that James was betraying him, and sending him out with a halter round his neck, to all but certain ruin, did say wild words—that it was better for him to serve the Frenchman than such a master—that perhaps he might go over to the Frenchman after all—or some folly of the kind, in that same rash tone which, as we have seen, has got him into trouble so often already: and so I leave the matter, saying, Beware of making any man an offender for a word, much less one who is being hunted to death in his old age, and knows it.

However this may be, the fleet sails; but with no bright auguries. The mass of the sailors are 'a scum of men;' they are mutinous and troublesome; and what is worse, have got among them (as, perhaps, they were intended to have) the notion that Raleigh's being still 'non ens' in law absolves them from obeying him

when they do not choose, and permits them to say of him behind his back what they list. They have long delays at Plymouth. Sir Warham's ship cannot get out of the Thames. Pennington, at the Isle of Wight, 'cannot redeem his bread from the bakers,' and has to ride back to London to get money from Lady Raleigh. The poor lady has it not, and gives a note of hand to Mr. Wood of Portsmouth. Alas for her! She has sunk her 8000*l.*, and, beside that, sold her Wickham estate for 2500*l.*; and all is on board the fleet. 'A hundred pieces' are all the ready money the hapless pair had left on earth, and they have parted them together. Raleigh has fifty-five, and she forty-five, till God send it back—if, indeed, he ever send it. The star is sinking low in the west. Trouble on trouble. Sir John Fane has neither men nor money; Captain Witney has not provisions enough, and Raleigh has to sell his plate in Plymouth to help him. Courage! one last struggle to redeem his good name!

Then storms off Scilly—a pinnace is sunk; faithful Captain King driven back into Bristol; the rest have to lie by awhile in some Irish port for a fair wind. Then Bailey deserts with the Southampton at the Canaries; then 'unnatural weather,' so that a fourteen days' voyage takes forty days. Then 'the distemper' breaks out under the line. The simple diary of that sad voyage still remains, full of curious and valuable nautical hints; but recording the loss of friend on friend; four or five officers, and, 'to our great grief, our principal refiner, Mr. Fowler.' 'Crab, my old servant.' Next a lamentable twenty-four hours, in which they lose Pigott, the lieutenant-general, 'mine honest frinde, Mr. John Talbot, one that had lived with me a leven yeeres in the Tower, an excellent general skoller, and a faithful and true man as ever lived,'

with two 'very fair conditioned gentlemen,' and 'mine own cook Francis.' Then more officers and men, and my 'cusen Payton.' Then the water is near spent, and they are forced to come to half allowance, till they save and drink greedily whole canfuls of the bitter rain water. At last Raleigh's own turn comes; running on deck in a squall, he gets wet through, and has twenty days of burning fever; 'never man suffered a more furious heat,' during which he eats nothing but now and then a stewed prune.

At last they make the land, at the mouth of the Urapoho, far south of their intended goal. They ask for Leonard the Indian, 'who lived with me in England three or four years, the same man that took Mr. Harcourt's brother, and fifty men, when they were in extreme distress, and had no means to live there but by the help of this Indian, whom they made believe that they were my men;' but the faithful Indian is gone up the country, and they stood away for Cayenne, 'where the cacique (Harry) was also my servant, and had lived with me in the Tower two years.'

Courage once more, brave old heart! Here, at least, thou art among friends, who know thee for what thou art, and look out longingly for thee as their deliverer.

Courage; for thou art in fairyland once more; the land of boundless hope and possibility. Though England and England's heart be changed, yet God's earth endures, and the harvest is still here, waiting to be reaped by those who dare. Twenty stormy years may have changed thee, but they have not changed the fairyland of thy prison dreams. Still the mighty Ceiba trees with their silk pods tower on the palm-fringed islets; still the dark mangrove thickets guard the mouths of unknown streams, whose granite sands are rich with gold. Friendly Indians come, and Harry

with them, bringing maize, peccari pork, and armadillos, plantains and pine-apples, and all eat and gather strength; and Raleigh writes home to his wife, 'to say that I may yet be king of the Indians here, were a vanity. But my name hath lived among them'—as well it might. For many a year those simple hearts shall look for him in vain, and more than two centuries and a half afterwards, dim traditions of the great white chief who bade them stand out to the last against the Spaniards, and he would come and dwell among them, shall linger among the Carib tribes; even, say some, the tattered relics of an English flag, which he left among them that they might distinguish his countrymen.

Happy for him had he stayed there indeed, and been their king. How easy for him to have grown old in peace at Cayenne! But no; he must on for honour's sake, and bring home if it were but a basketful of that ore, to show the king, that he may save his credit. He has promised Arundel that he will return. And return he will. So onward he goes to the 'Triangle Islands.' There he sends off five small vessels for Orinoco, with four hundred men. The faithful Keymis has to command and guide the expedition. Sir Warham is lying ill of the fever, all but dead; so George Raleigh is sent in his place as sergeant-major, and with him five land companies, one of which is commanded by young Walter, Raleigh's son; another by a Captain Parker, of whom we shall have a word to say presently.

Keymis's orders are explicit. He is to go up; find the mine, and open it; and if the Spaniards attack him, repel force by force: but he is to avoid, if possible, an encounter with them: not for fear of breaking the peace, but because he has 'a scum of men, a few gentlemen excepted, and I would not for all the world re-

ccive a blow from the Spaniards to the dishonour of our nation.' There we have no concealment of hostile instructions, any more than in Raleigh's admirable instructions to his fleet, which after laying down excellent laws for morality, religion, and discipline, go on with clause after clause as to what is to be done if they meet 'the enemy.' What enemy? Why, all Spanish ships which sail the seas; and who, if they happen to be sufficiently numerous, will assuredly attack, sink, burn, and destroy Raleigh's whole squadron, for daring to sail for that continent which Spain claims as its own.

Raleigh runs up the coast to Trinidad, and in through the Serpent's Mouth, round Punto Gallo to the famous lake of Pitch, where all recruit themselves with fish and armadillos, pheasants (Penelope Cristata), palmitos, and guavas, and await the return of the expedition from the last day of December to the middle of February. They see something of the Spaniards meanwhile, and what they see is characteristic. Sir John Ferns is sent up to the Spanish town, to try if they will trade for tobacco. The Spaniards parley; in the midst of the parley pour a volley of musketry into them at forty paces, yet hurt never a man; and send them off calling them thieves and traitors. Fray Simon's Spanish account of the matter is, that Raleigh intended to disembark his men, that they might march inland on San Joseph. How he found out the fact remains to be proved. In the meanwhile, I shall prefer believing that Raleigh is not likely to have told a lie for his own private amusement in his own private diary. I cannot blame the Spaniards much; the advices from Spain are sufficient to explain their hostility.

On the 29th the Spaniards attack three men and a boy who are ashore boiling the fossil pitch; kill one man, and carry off the boy. Raleigh, instead of going

up to the Spanish port and demanding satisfaction, as he would have been justified in doing after this second outrage, remains quietly where he is, expecting daily to be attacked by Spanish armadas, and resolved to 'burn by their sides.' Happily, or unhappily, he escapes them. Probably he thinks they waited for him at Margarita, expecting him to range the Spanish main.

At last the weary days of sickness and anxiety succeed to days of terror. On the 1st of February a strange report comes by an Indian. An inland savage has brought confused and contradictory news down the river, that San Thomé is sacked, the governor and two Spanish captains slain (names given), and two English captains, nameless. After this entry follow a few confused ones, set down as happening in January, concerning attempts to extract the truth from the Indians and negligence of the mariners, who are diligent in nothing but pillaging and stealing. And so ends abruptly this sad document.

The truth comes at last;—but when, does not appear, in a letter from Keymis, dated January 8. San Thomé has been stormed, sacked, and burnt. Four refiners' houses were found in it; the best in the town; so that the Spaniards have been mining there: but no coin or bullion except a little plate. One English captain is killed, and that captain is Walter Raleigh, his first-born. He died, leading them on, when some 'more careful of valour and safety, began to recoil shamefully.' His last words were, 'Lord have mercy upon me, and prosper our enterprise.' A Spanish captain, Erinetta, struck him down with the butt of a musket after he had received a bullet. John Plessington, his sergeant, avenged him by running Erinetta through with his halbert.

Keymis has not yet been to the mine; he could

not, by reason of the murmurings, discords, and vexations;' but he will go at once, make trial of the mine, and come down to Trinidad by the Macareo mouth. He sends a parcel of scattered papers (probably among them the three letters from the King of Spain), a roll of tobacco, a tortoise, some oranges and lemons. 'Praying God to give you health and strength of body, and a mind armed against all extremities, I rest ever to be commanded, your lordship's, Keymish.'

'Oh Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee!' But weeping is in vain. The noble lad sleeps there under the palm trees, beside the mighty tropic stream, while the fair Basset, 'his bride in the sight of God,' recks not of him as she wanders in the woods of Umberleigh, wife to the son of Raleigh's deadliest foe. Raleigh, Raleigh, surely God's blessing is not on this voyage of thine. Surely He hath set thy misdeeds before Him, and thy secret sins in the light of His countenance.

Another blank of misery: but his honour is still safe. Keymis will return with that gold ore, that pledge of his good faith for which he has ventured all. Surely God will let that come after all, now that he has paid as its price his first-born's blood?

At last Keymis returns with thinned numbers. All are weary, spirit-broken, discontented, mutinous. Where is the gold ore?

There is none. Keymis has never been to the mine after all. His companions curse him as a traitor who has helped Raleigh to deceive them into ruin; the mine is imaginary—a lie. The crews are ready to break into open mutiny; after a while they will do so.

Yes, God is setting this man's secret sins in the light of His countenance. If he has been ambitious, his ambition has punished itself now. If he has cared

more for his own honour than for his wife and children, that sin too has punished itself. If he has (which I affirm not) tampered with truth for the sake of what seemed to him noble and just ends, that too has punished itself; for his men do not trust him. If he has (which I affirm not) done any wrong in that matter of Cobham, that too has punished itself; for his men, counting him as 'non ens' in law, will not respect or obey him. If he has spoken after his old fashion, rash and exaggerated words, and goes on speaking them, even though it be through the pressure of despair, that too shall punish itself; and for every idle word that he shall say, God will bring him into judgment. And why, but because he is noble? Why, but because he is nearer to God by a whole heaven than Buckinghams, Henry Howards, Salisburys, and others whom God lets fatten on their own sins, having no understanding, because they are in honour, and have children at their hearts' desire, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes? Not so does God deal with His elect, when they will try to worship at once self and Him; He requires truth in the inward parts, and will purge them till they are true, and single-eyed, and full of light.

Keymis returns with the wreck of his party. The scene between him and Raleigh may be guessed. Keymis has excuse on excuse. He could not get obeyed after young Raleigh's death: he expected to find that Sir Walter was either dead of his sickness, or of grief for his son, and had no wish 'to enrich a company of rascals who made no account of him.' He dare not go up to the mine because (and here Raleigh thinks his excuse fair) the fugitive Spaniards lay in the craggy woods through which he would have to pass, and that he had not men enough even to hold

the town securely. If he reached the mine, and left a company there, he had no provisions for them; and he dared not send backward and forward to the town, while the Spaniards were in the woods. The warnings sent by Gondomar had undone all, and James's treachery had done its work. So Keymis 'thinking it a greater error (so he said) to discover the mine to the Spaniards, than to excuse himself to the Company, said that he could not find it.' From all which, one thing at least is evident, that Keymis believed in the existence of the mine.

Raleigh 'rejects these fancies;' tells him before divers gentlemen, that 'a blind man might find it, by the marks which Keymis himself had set down under his hand:' that 'his case of losing so many men in the woods' was a mere pretence: after Walter was slain, he knew that Keymis had no care of any man's surviving. 'You have undone me, wounded my credit with the King, past recovery.' As you have followed your own advice, and not mine, you must satisfy his Majesty. I shall be glad if you can do it: but I cannot.' There is no use dwelling on such vain regrets and reproaches. Raleigh perhaps is bitter, unjust, though I cannot see that he was; as he himself writes twice, to his wife and Sir Ralph Winwood, his 'brains are broken.' He writes to them both, and re-opens the letters to add long postscripts, at his wits' end. Keymis goes off; spends a few miserable days; and then enters Raleigh's cabin. He has written his apology to Lord Arundel, and begs Raleigh to allow of it. 'No. You have undone me by your obstinacy, I will not favour or colour your former folly.' 'Is that your resolution, sir?' 'It is.' 'I know not then, sir, what course to take.' And so he goes out, and into his own cabin overhead. A minute after, a

pistol-shot is heard. Raleigh sends up a boy to know the reason. Keymis answers from within, that he has fired it off because it had been long charged; and all is quiet.

Half-an-hour after the boy goes into the cabin. Keymis is lying on his bed, the pistol by him. The boy moves him. The pistol-shot has broken a rib, and gone no further: but as the corpse is turned over, a long knife is buried in that desperate heart. Another of the old heroes is gone to his wild account.

Gradually drops of explanation ooze out. The 'Sergeant-Major, Raleigh's nephew, and others, confess that Keymis told them that he could have brought them in two hours to the mine: but as the young heir was slain, and his father was unpardoned, and not like to live, he had no reason to open the mine, either for the Spaniard *or the King*.' Those latter words are significant. What cared the old Elizabethan seaman for the weal of such a king? And, indeed, what good to such a king would all the mines in Guiana be? They answered that the King, nevertheless, had 'granted Raleigh his heart's desire under the great seal.' He replied that 'the grant to Raleigh was to a man 'non ens' in law, and, therefore, of no force.' Here, too, James's policy has worked well. How could men dare or persevere under such a cloud?

How, indeed, could they have found heart to sail at all? The only answer is, that they knew Raleigh well enough to have utter faith in him, and that Keymis himself knew of the mine.

Puppies at home in England gave out that he had killed himself from remorse at having deceived so many gentlemen with an imaginary phantom. Every one, of course, according to his measure of charity, has power and liberty to assume any motive which he will. Mine

is simply the one which shows upon the face of the documents; that the old follower, devoted alike to the dead son and to the doomed father, feeling that he had, he scarce knew how, failed in the hour of need, frittered away the last chance of a mighty enterprise, which had been his fixed idea for years, and ruined the man whom he adored, avenged upon himself the fault of having disobeyed orders, given peremptorily, and to be peremptorily executed.

Here, perhaps, my tale should end; for all beyond is but the waking of the corpse. The last death-struggle of the Elizabethan heroism is over, and all its remains vanish slowly, in an undignified sickening way. All epics end so. After the war of Troy, Achilles must die by coward Paris' arrow, in some mysterious confused pitiful fashion; and stately Hecuba must rail herself into a very dog, and bark for ever shamefully around lonely Cynossema. Young David ends as a dotard—Solomon as worse. Glorious Alexander must die, half of fever, half of drunkenness, as the fool dieth. Charles the Fifth, having thrown away all but his follies, ends in a convent, a superstitious imbecile; Napoleon squabbles to the last with Sir Hudson Lowe about champagne. It must be so; and the glory must be God's alone. For in great men, and great times, there is nothing good or vital, but what is of God, and not of man's self. And when He taketh away that divine breath they die, and return again to their dust. But the earth does not lose; for when he sendeth forth His Spirit they live, and renew the face of the earth. A new generation arises, with clearer sight, with fuller experience, sometimes with nobler aims; and—

> The old order changeth, giving place to the new,
> And God fulfils himself in many ways.

The Elizabethan epic did not end a day too soon.

There was no more life left in it; and God had something better in store for England. Raleigh's ideal was a noble one: but God's was nobler far. Raleigh would have made her a gold kingdom, like Spain, and destroyed her very vitals by that gold, as Spain was destroyed. And all the while the great and good God was looking steadfastly upon that little struggling Virginian village, Raleigh's first-born, forgotten in his new mighty dreams, and saying, 'Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.' There, and not in Guiana; upon the simple tillers of the soil, not among wild reckless gold-hunters, would His blessing rest. The very coming darkness would bring brighter light. The evil age itself would be the parent of new good, and drive across the seas steadfast Pilgrim Fathers, and generous Royalist Cavaliers, to be the parents of a mightier nation than has ever yet possessed the earth. Verily, God's ways are wonderful, and his counsels in the great deep.

So ends the Elizabethan epic. Must we follow the corpse to the grave? It is necessary.

And now, 'you gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease,' what would you have done in like case? —Your last die thrown; your last stake lost; your honour, as you fancy, stained for ever; your eldest son dead in battle—What would you have done? What Walter Raleigh did was this. He kept his promise. He had promised Lord Arundel to return to England; and return he did.

But it is said, his real intention, as he himself confessed, was to turn pirate, and take the Mexico fleet.

That wild thoughts of such a deed may have crossed his mind, may have been a terrible temptation to him, may even have broken out in hasty words, one does

not deny. He himself says that he spoke of such a thing, 'to keep his men together.' All depends on how the words were spoken. The form of the sentence, the tone of voice, is everything. Who could blame him, if, seeing some of the captains whom he had most trusted deserting him, his men heaping him with every slander, and, as he solemnly swore on the scaffold, calling witnesses thereto by name, forcing him to take an oath that he would not return to England before they would have him, and locking him into his own cabin—who could blame him, I ask, for saying, in that daring off-hand way of his, which has so often before got him into trouble, 'Come, my lads, do not despair. If the worst comes to the worst, there is the Plate-fleet to fall back upon?' When I remember, too, that the taking of the said Plate-fleet was, in Raleigh's eyes, an altogether just thing; and that he knew perfectly, that if he succeeded therein, he would be backed by the public opinion of all England, and probably buy his pardon of James, who, if he loved Spain well, loved money better; my surprise rather is, that he did not go and do it. As for any meeting of captains in his cabin, and serious proposal of such a plan, I believe it to be simply one of the innumerable lies which James inserted in his declaration, gathered from the tales of men, who fearing (and reasonably) lest their heads should follow Raleigh's, tried to curry favour by slandering him. This 'Declaration' has been so often exposed, that I may safely pass it by; and pass by almost as safely the argument which some have drawn from a chance expression of his in his pathetic letter to Lady Raleigh, in which he 'hopes that God would send him somewhat before his return.' To prove an intention of piracy in the despairing words of a ruined man writing to comfort a ruined wife for the loss of

her first-born, is surely to deal out hard measure. Heaven have mercy upon us, if all the hasty words which woe has wrung from our hearts are to be so judged either by man or God!

Sir Julius Cæsar, again, one of the commission appointed to examine him, informs us, that on being confronted with Captains St. Leger and Pennington, he confessed that he proposed the taking of the Mexico fleet, if the mine failed. To which I can only answer, that all depends on how the thing was said, and that this is the last fact which we should find in Sir Julius's notes, which are, it is confessed, so confused, obscure, and full of gaps, as to be often hardly intelligible. The same remark applies to Wilson's story, which I agree with Mr. Tytler in thinking worthless. Wilson, it must be understood, is employed, after Raleigh's return, as a spy upon him, which office he executes, all confess, (and Wilson himself as much as any,) as falsely, treacherously, and hypocritically as did ever sinful man; and, inter alia, he has this, 'This day he told me what discourse he and the Lord Chancellor had about taking the Plate-fleet, which he confessed he would have taken had he lighted on it.' To which my Lord Chancellor said, 'Why, you would have been a pirate.' 'Oh,' quoth he, 'did you ever know of any that were pirates for millions? They only that wish for small things are pirates.' Now, setting aside the improbability that Raleigh should go out of his way to impeach himself to the man whom he must have known was set there to find matter for his death, all, we say, depends on how it was said. If the Lord Chancellor ever said to Raleigh, 'To take the Mexico fleet would be piracy,' it would have been just like Raleigh to give such an answer. The speech is a perfectly true one: Raleigh knew the world, no man

better; and saw through its hollowness, and the cant and hypocrisy of his generation; and he sardonically states an undeniable fact. He is not expressing his own morality, but that of the world; just as he is doing in that passage of his apology, about which I must complain of Mr. Napier. 'It was a maxim of his,' says Mr. Napier, 'that good success admits of no examination.' This is not fair. The sentence in the original goes on, 'so the contrary allows of no excuse, however reasonable and just whatsoever.' His argument all through the beginning of the apology, supported by instance on instance from history, is,—I cannot get a just hearing, because I have failed in opening this mine. So it is always. Glory covers the multitude of sins. But a man who has failed is a fair mark for every slanderer, puppy, ignoramus, discontented mutineer; as I am now. What else, in the name of common sense, could have been his argument? Does Mr. Napier really think that Raleigh, even if in the face of all the noble and pious words which he had written he held so immoral a doctrine, would have been shameless and senseless enough to assert his own rascality in an apology addressed to the most 'religious' of kings in the most canting of generations?

But still more astonished are we at the use which Mr. Napier has made of Captain Parker's letter. The letter is written by a man in a state of frantic rage and disappointment. There never was any mine, he believes now. Keymis's 'delays we found mere delusions; for he was false to all men and hateful to himself, loathing to live since he could do no more villany. I will speak no more of this hateful fellow to God and man.' And it is on the testimony of a man in this temper that we are asked to believe that 'the admiral

and vice-admiral,' Raleigh and St. Leger, are going to the Western Islands 'to look for homeward-bound men,' if, indeed, the looking for homeward-bound men means really looking for the Spanish fleet, and not merely for recruits for their crews. I never recollect (and I have read pretty fully the sea-records of those days) such a synonym used either for the Mexican or Indian fleet. But let this be as it may, the letter proves too much. For, first, it proves, that whosoever is not going to turn 'pirate,' our calm and charitable friend Captain Parker is; 'for my part, by the permission of God, I will either *make a voyage*, or bury myself in the sea.' Now, what making a voyage meant there is no doubt; and the sum total of the letter is, that a man intending to turn rover himself accuses, under the influence of violent passion, his comrades of doing the like. We may believe him about himself: about others, we shall wait for testimony a little less interested.

But the letter proves too much again. For Parker says that 'Witney and Woolaston are gone off a-head to look for homeward-bound men,' thus agreeing with Raleigh's message to his wife, that 'Witney, for whom I sold all my plate at Plymouth, and to whom I gave more credit and countenance than to all the captains of my fleet, ran from me at the Grenadas, and Woolaston with him.'

And now, reader, how does this of Witney, and Woolaston, and Parker's intentions to 'pirate' separately, (if it be true,) agree with King James's story of Raleigh's calling a council of war and proposing an attack on the Plate-fleet? One or the other must needs be a lie; probably both. Witney's ship was of only 160 tons; Woolaston's probably smaller. Five such ships would be required, as any reader of Hakluyt

must know, to take a single Carack; and it would be no use running the risk of hanging for any less prize. The Spanish main was warned and armed, and the Western Isles also. Is it possible that these two men would have been insane enough in such circumstances to go without Raleigh, if they could have gone with him? And is it possible that he, if he had any set purpose of attacking the Plate-fleet, would not have kept them, in order to attempt that with him which neither they nor he could do without each other? Moreover, no 'piratical' act ever took place, (and if any had, we should have heard enough about it;) and why is Parker to be believed against Raleigh alone, when there is little doubt that he slandered all the rest of the captains? Lastly, it was to this very Parker, with Mr. Tresham, and another gentleman, that Raleigh appealed by name on the scaffold, as witnesses that it was his crew who tried to keep him from going home, and not he them.

My own belief is, and it is surely simple and rational enough, that Raleigh's 'brains,' as he said, 'were broken;' that he had no distinct plan: but that loth to leave the New World without a second attempt on Guiana, he went up to Newfoundland to re-victual, 'and with good hope,' (as he wrote to Winwood himself,) 'of keeping the sea till August with some four reasonable good ships,' (probably, as Oldys remarks, to try a trading voyage,) but found his gentlemen too dispirited and incredulous, his men too mutinous to do anything; and seeing his ships go home one by one, at last followed them himself, because he had promised Arundel and Pembroke so to do, having, after all, as he declared on the scaffold, extreme difficulty in persuading his men to land at all in England. The other lies about him, as of his having intended to desert his

soldiers in Guiana, his having taken no tools to work the mine, and so forth, one only notices to say, that the declaration takes care to make the most of them, without deigning (after its fashion) to adduce any proof but anonymous hearsays. If it be true that Bacon drew up that famous document, it reflects no credit either on his honesty or his 'inductive science.'

So Raleigh returns, anchors in Plymouth. He finds that Captain North has brought home the news of his mishaps, and that there is a proclamation against him, (which by the bye lies, for it talks of limitations and cautions given to Raleigh which do not appear in his commission,) and, moreover, a warrant out for his apprehension. He sends his men on shore, and starts for London to surrender himself, in company with faithful Captain King, who alone clings to him to the last, and from whom we have details of the next few days. Near Ashburton, he is met by Sir Lewis Stukely, his near kinsman; Vice-Admiral of Devon, who has orders to arrest him. Raleigh tells him that he has saved him the trouble; and the two return to Plymouth, where Stukely, strangely enough, leaves him at liberty, and rides about the country. We should be slow in imputing baseness: but one cannot help suspecting from Stukely's subsequent conduct that he had from the first private orders to give Raleigh a chance of trying to escape, in order to have a handle against him, such as his own deeds had not yet given.

The ruse, if it existed then (as it did afterwards) succeeds. Raleigh hears bad news. Gondomar has (or has not) told his story to the king by crying, 'Piratas! piratas! piratas!' and then rushing out without explanation. James is in terror lest what had happened should break off the darling Spanish match. Raleigh foresees ruin, perhaps death. Life is sweet, and

Guiana is yet where it was. He may win a basketful of the ore still, and prove himself no liar. He will escape to France. Faithful King finds him a Rochelle ship; he takes boat to her, goes half-way, and returns. Honour is sweeter than life, and James may yet be just. The next day he bribes the master to wait for him one more day, starts for the ship once more, and again returns to Plymouth (King will make oath) of his own free will. The temptation must have been terrible, and the sin none. What kept him from yielding but innocence and honour? He will clear himself; and if not, abide the worst. Stukely and James found out these facts, and made good use of them afterwards. For now comes 'a severe letter from my Lords' to bring Ralegh up as speedily as his health will permit; and with it comes one Mannourie, a French quack, of whom honest King takes little note at the time, but who will make himself remembered.

And now begins a series of scenes most pitiable. Raleigh's brains are indeed broken. He is old, worn-out with the effects of his fever, lame, ruined, broken-hearted, and, for the first time in his life, weak and silly. He takes into his head the paltriest notion that he can gain time to pacify the king by feigning himself sick. He puts implicit faith in the rogue Mannourie, whom he has never seen before. He sends forward Lady Ralegh to London—perhaps ashamed, (as who would not have been?) to play the fool in that sweet presence; and with her good Captain King, who is to engage one Cotterell, an old servant of Raleigh's, to find a ship wherein to escape, if the worst comes to the worst. Cotterell sends King to an old boatswain of his, who owns a ketch. She is to lie off Tilbury; and so King waits Raleigh's arrival. What passed in the next four or five days will never be truly known, for

our only account comes from two self-convicted villains, Stukely and Mannourie. On these disgusting details I shall not enter. First, because one cannot trust a word of them; secondly, because no one will wish to hear them who feels, as I do, how pitiable and painful is the sight of a great heart and mind utterly broken. Neither shall I spend time on Stukely's villanous treatment of Raleigh, (for which he had a commission from James in writing,) his pretending to help him to escape, going down the Thames in a boat with him, trying in vain to make honest King as great a rogue as himself. Like most rascalities, Stukely's conduct, even as he himself states it, is very obscure. All that we can see is, that Cotterell told Stukely everything; that Stukely bade Cotterell carry on the deceit; that Stukely had orders from head-quarters to incite Raleigh to say or do something which might form a fresh ground of accusal; that, being a clumsy rogue, he failed, and fell back on abetting Raleigh's escape, as a last resource. Be it as it may, he throws off the mask as soon as Raleigh has done enough to prove an intent to escape; arrests him, and conducts him to the Tower.

There two shameful months are spent in trying to find out some excuse for Raleigh's murder. Wilson is set over him as a spy; his letters to his wife are intercepted. Every art is used to extort a confession of a great plot with France, and every art fails utterly—simply, it seems to me, because there was no plot. Raleigh writes an apology, letters of entreaty, self-justification, what not; all, in my opinion, just and true enough; but like his speech on the scaffold, weak, confused—the product of a 'broken brain.' However, his head must come off; and as a last resource, it must be taken off upon the sentence of fifteen years ago, and he who was condemned for plotting with Spain, must

die for plotting against her. It is a pitiable business: but, as Osborne says, in a passage, (p. 108 of his Memoirs of James,) for which one freely forgives him all his sins and lies, (and they are many,)—

> As the foolish idolaters were wont to sacrifice the choicest of their children to the devil, so our king gave up his incomparable jewel to the will of this monster of ambition (the Spaniard), under the pretence of a superannuated transgression, contrary to the opinion of the more honest sort of gownsmen, who maintained that his Majesty's pardon lay inclusively in the commission he gave him on his setting out to sea; it being incongruous that he, who remained under the notion of one dead in the law, should as a general dispose of the lives of others, not being himself master of his own.

But no matter. He must die. The Queen intercedes for him, as do all honest men: but in vain. He has twenty-four hours' notice to prepare for death; eats a good breakfast; takes a cup of sack and a pipe; makes a rambling speech, in which one notes only the intense belief that he is an honest man, and the intense desire to make others believe so, in the very smallest matters; and then dies smilingly, as one weary of life. One makes no comment. Raleigh's life really ended on the day that poor Keymis returned from San Thomé.

And then?

As we said, Truth is stranger than fiction. No dramatist dare invent a 'poetic justice' more perfect than fell upon the traitor. It is not always so, no doubt. God reserves many a greater sinner for that most awful of all punishments—impunity. But there are crises in a nation's life in which God makes terrible examples, to put before the most stupid and sensual the choice of Hercules, the upward road of life, the downward one which leads to the pit. Since the time of Pharaoh and the Red Sea host, history is full of such palpable, unmistakeable revelations of the Divine Nemesis; and in England, too, at that moment, the crisis was there; and the judgment of God was revealed

accordingly. Sir Lewis Stukely remained it seems at Court; high in favour with James: but he found, nevertheless, that people looked darkly on him. Like all self-convicted rogues, he must needs thrust his head into his own shame, and one day he goes to good old Lord Charles Howard's house; for being Vice-Admiral of Devon, he has affairs with the old Armada hero. The old lion explodes in an unexpected roar. 'Darest thou come into my presence, thou base fellow, who art reputed the common scorn and contempt of all men? Were it not in mine own house, I would cudgel thee with my staff for presuming to speak to me!' Stukely, his tail between his legs, goes off and complains to James. 'What should I do with him? Hang him? On my sawle, mon, if I hung all that spoke ill of thee, all the trees in the island were too few.' Such is the gratitude of kings, thinks Stukely; and retires to write foolish pamphlets in self justification, which, unfortunately for his memory, still remain to make bad worse.

Within twelve months he, the rich and proud Vice-Admiral of Devon, with a shield of sixteen quarterings, and the blood-royal in his veins, was detected debasing the King's coin within the precincts of the royal palace, together with his old accomplice, who, being taken, confessed that his charges against Raleigh were false. He fled, a ruined man, back to his native county, and his noble old seat of Affton; but Até is on the heels of such—

> Slowly she tracks him and sure, as a lyme-hound,
> sudden she grips him,
> Crushing him, blind in his pride, for a sign and a terror to
> mortals.

A terrible plebiscitum had been passed in the West country against the betrayer of its last Worthy. The

gentlemen closed their doors against him; the poor refused him (so goes the legend) fire and water. Driven by the Furies, he fled from Affton, and wandered northward down the vale of Taw, away to Appledore, and there took boat, and out into the boundless Atlantic, over the bar, now crowded with shipping, for which Raleigh's genius had discovered a new trade and a new world.

Sixteen miles to the westward, like a blue cloud on the horizon, rises the Ultima Thule of Devon, the little isle of Lundy. There one outlying peak of granite, carrying up a shelf of slate upon its southern flank, has risen through the waves, and formed an island some three miles long, desolate, flat-headed, fretted by every frost and storm, walled all round with four hundred feet of granite cliff, sacred only (then at least) to puffins and pirates. Over the single landing-place frowns from the cliff the keep of an old ruin, 'Moresco Castle,' as they call it still, where some bold rover, Sir John de Moresco, in the times of the old Edwards, worked his works of darkness: a grey, weird, uncanny pile of moorstone, through which all the winds of heaven howl day and night.

In a chamber of that ruin died Sir Lewis Stukely, Lord of Affton, cursing God and man.

These things are true. Said I not well that reality is stranger than romance?

But no Nemesis followed James.

The answer will depend much upon what readers consider to be a Nemesis. If to have found England one of the greatest countries in Europe, and to have left it one of the most inconsiderable and despicable; if to be fooled by flatterers to the top of his bent, until he fancied himself all but a god, while he was not even a man, and could neither speak the truth, keep himself

sober, or look on a drawn sword without shrinking; if, lastly, to have left behind him a son who, in spite of many chivalrous instincts, unknown to his father, had been so indoctrinated in that father's vices as to find it impossible to speak the truth even when it served his purpose; if all these things be no Nemesis, then none fell on James Stuart.

But of that son, at least, the innocent blood was required. He, too, had his share in the sin. In Carew Raleigh's simple and manful petition to the Commons of England for the restoration of his inheritance, we find a significant fact, stated without one word of comment, bitter or otherwise. At Prince Henry's death, the Sherborne lands had been given again to Carr, Lord Somerset. To him, too, 'the whirligig of time brought round its revenges,' and he lost them when arraigned and condemned for poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury. Then Sir John Digby, afterwards Earl of Bristol, begged Sherborne of the King, and had it. Pembroke (Shakspeare's Pembroke) brought young Carew to Court, hoping to move the tyrant's heart. James saw him and shuddered; perhaps conscience-stricken, perhaps of mere cowardice. 'He looked like the ghost of his father,' as he well might, to that guilty soul. Good Pembroke advised his young kinsman to travel, which he did till James's death in the next year. Then coming over (this is his own story) he asked of Parliament to be restored in blood, that he might inherit aught that might fall to him in England. His petition was read twice in the Lords. Whereon 'King Charles sent Sir James Fullarton (then of the bedchamber) to Mr. Raleigh, to command him to come to him; and being brought in, the King, after using him with great civility, notwithstanding told him plainly, that when he was prince, he had promised the Earl of

Bristol to secure his title to Sherborne against the heirs of Sir Walter Raleigh; whereon the earl had given him, then prince, ten thousand pounds; that now he was bound to make good his promise, being king; that, therefore, unless he would quit his right and title to Sherborne, he neither could or would pass his bill of restoration.'

Young Raleigh, like a good Englishman, 'urged,' he says, 'the justness of his cause; that he desired only the liberty of the subject, and to be left to the law, which was never denied any freeman.' The king remained obstinate. His noble brother's love for the mighty dead weighed nothing with him, much less justice. Poor young Raleigh was forced to submit. The act for his restoration was passed, reserving Sherborne for Lord Bristol, and Charles patched up the scoundrelly affair, by allowing to Lady Raleigh and her son after her, a life pension of four hundred a year.

Young Carew tells his story simply, and without a note of bitterness; though he professes his intent to range himself and his two sons for the future 'under the banner of the Commons of England,' he may be a royalist for any word beside. Even where he mentions the awful curse of his mother, he only alludes to its fulfilment by—'that which hath happened since to that royal family, is too sad and disastrous for me to repeat, and yet too visible not to be discerned.' We can have no doubt that he tells the exact truth. Indeed the whole story fits Charles's character to the smallest details. The want of any real sense of justice, combined with the false notion of honour; the implacable obstinacy; the contempt for that law by which alone he held his crown; the combination of unkingly meanness in commanding a private interview, and shamelessness in confessing his own rascality—all these are true notes

of the man whose deliberate suicide stands written, a warning to all bad rulers till the end of time. But he must have been a rogue early in life, and a needy rogue too. That ten thousand pounds of Lord Bristol's money should make many a sentimentalist reconsider (if, indeed, sentimentalists can be made to reconsider, or even to consider, any thing) their notion of him as the incarnation of pious chivalry.

At least the ten thousand pounds cost Charles dear.

The widow's curse followed him home. Naseby fight and the Whitehall scaffold were God's judgment of such deeds, whatever man's may be.

'A MAD WORLD, MY MASTERS.'*

THE cholera, as was to be expected, has reappeared in England again; and England, as was to be expected, has taken no sufficient steps towards meeting it; so that if, as seems but too probable, the plague should spread next summer, we may count with tolerable certainty upon a loss of some ten thousand lives.

That ten thousand, or one thousand, innocent people should die, of whom most, if not all, might be saved alive, would seem at first sight a matter serious enough for the attention of 'philanthropists.' Those who abhor the practice of hanging one man would, one fancies, abhor equally that of poisoning many; and would protest as earnestly against the painful capital punishment of diarrhœa as against the painless one of hempen rope. Those who demand mercy for the Sepoy, and immunity for the Coolie women of Delhi, unsexed by their own brutal and shameless cruelty, would, one fancies, demand mercy also for the British workman, and immunity for his wife and family. One is therefore somewhat startled at finding that the British nation reserves to itself, though it forbids to its armies, the right of putting to death unarmed and unoffending men, women, and children.

After further consideration, however, one finds that there are, as usual, two sides to the question. One is bound, indeed, to believe, even before proof, that there are two sides. It cannot be without good and suffi-

* Fraser's Magazine, No. CCCXXXVII.

cient reason that the British public remains all but indifferent to sanitary reform; that though the science of epidemics, as a science, has been before the world for more than twenty years, nobody believes in it enough to act upon it, save some few dozen of fanatics, some of whom have (it cannot be denied) a direct pecuniary interest in disturbing what they choose to term the poison-manufactories of free and independent Britons.

Yes; we should surely respect the exprest will and conviction of the most practical of nations, arrived at after the experience of three choleras, stretching over a whole generation. Public opinion has declared against the necessity of sanitary reform: and is not public opinion known to be, in these last days, the Ithuriel's spear which is to unmask and destroy all the follies, superstitions, and cruelties of the universe? The immense majority of the British nation will neither cleanse themselves nor let others cleanse them: and are we not governed by majorities? Are not majorities, confessedly, always in the right, even when smallest, and a show of hands a surer test of truth than any amount of wisdom, learning, or virtue? How much more, then, when a whole free people is arrayed, in the calm magnificence of self-confident conservatism, against a few innovating and perhaps sceptical philosophasters? Then surely, if ever, vox populi is vox cœli.

And, in fact, when we come to examine the first and commonest objection against sanitary reformers, we find it perfectly correct. They are said to be theorists, dreamers of the study, who are ignorant of human nature; and who in their materialist optimism, have forgotten the existence of moral evil till they almost fancy at times that they can set the world right simply by righting its lowest material arrangements. The complaint is perfectly true. They have been ignorant of human nature; they have forgotten the existence of

moral evil; and if any religious periodical should complain of their denying original sin, they can only answer that they did in past years fall into that folly, but that subsequent experience has utterly convinced them of the truth of the doctrine.

For, misled by this ignorance of human nature, they expected help, from time to time, from various classes of the community, from whom no help (as they ought to have known at first) is to be gotten. Some, as a fact, expected the assistance of the clergy, and especially of the preachers of those denominations who believe that every human being, by the mere fact of his birth into this world, is destined to endless torture after death, unless the preacher can find an opportunity to deliver him therefrom before he dies. They supposed that to such preachers the mortal lives of men would be inexpressibly precious; that any science which held out a prospect of retarding death in the case of 'lost millions' would be hailed as a heavenly boon, and would be carried out with the fervour of men who felt that for the soul's sake no exertion was too great in behalf of the body.

A little more reflection would have quashed their vain hope. They would have recollected that each of these preachers was already connected with a congregation; that he had already a hold on them, and they on him; that he was bound to provide for their spiritual wants before going forth to seek for fresh objects of his ministry. They would have recollected that on the old principle (and a very sound one), of a bird in the hand being worth two in the bush, the minister of a congregation would feel it his duty, as well as his interest, not to defraud his flock of his labours by spending valuable time on a secular subject like sanitary reform, in the hope of possibly preserving a few human beings,

whose souls he might hereafter (and that again would be merely a possibility) benefit.

They would have recollected, again, that these congregations are almost exclusively composed of those classes who have little or nothing to fear from epidemics, and (what is even more important) who would have to bear the expenses of sanitary improvements. But so sanguine, so reckless of human conditions had their theories made them, that they actually expected that parish rectors, already burdened with over-work and vestry quarrels—nay, even that preachers who got their bread by pew-rents, and whose life-long struggle was, therefore, to keep those pews filled, and those renters in good humour—should astound the respectable house-owners and rate-payers who sat beneath them by the appalling words, 'You, and not the visitation of God, are the cause of epidemics; and of you, now that you are once fairly warned of your responsibility, will your brothers' blood be required.' Conceive Sanitary Reformers expecting this of 'ministers,' let their denomination be what it might—many of the poor men, too, with a wife and seven children! Truly has it been said, that nothing is so cruel as the unreasonableness of a fanatic.

They forgot, too, that sanitary science, like geology, must be at first sight 'suspect' in the eyes of the priests of all denominations, at least till they shall have arrived at a much higher degree of culture than they now possess.

Like geology, it interferes with that Deus e machinâ theory of human affairs which has been in all ages the stronghold of priestcraft. That the Deity is normally absent, and not present; that He works on the world by interference, and not by continuous laws; that it is the privilege of the priesthood to assign causes for these

'judgments' and 'visitations' of the Almighty, and to tell mankind why He is angry with them, and has broken the laws of nature to punish them;—this, in every age, has seemed to the majority of priests a doctrine to be defended at all hazards; for without it, so they hold, their occupation were gone at once.* No wonder, then, if they view with jealousy a set of laymen attributing these 'judgments' to purely chemical laws, and to misdoings and ignorance which have as yet no place in the ecclesiastical catalogue of sins. True, it may be that the Sanitary Reformers are right: but they had rather not think so. And it is very easy not to think so. They only have to ignore, to avoid examining the facts. Their canon of utility is a peculiar one; and with facts which do not come under that canon they have no concern. It may be true, for instance, that the eighteenth century, which to the clergy is a period of scepticism, darkness, and spiritual death, is the very century which saw more done for science, for civilization, for agriculture, for manufacture, for the prolongation and support of human life, than any preceding one for a thousand years and more. What matter? That is a 'secular' question, of which they need know nothing. And sanitary reform (if true) is just such another; a matter (as slavery has been seen to be by the preachers of the United States) for the legislator, and not for those whose kingdom is 'not of this world.'

Others again expected, with equal wisdom, the assistance of the political economist. The fact is unde-

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* A most honourable exception to this rule is a sermon by the Rev. C. Richson, of Manchester, on the Sanitary Laws of the Old Testament, with notes by Dr. Sutherland.

niable, but at the same time inexplicable. What they could have found in the doctrines of most modern political economists which should lead them to suppose that human life would be precious in their eyes, is unknown to the writer of these pages. Those whose bugbear has been over-population, whose motto has been an euphuistic version of

> The more the merrier; but the fewer the better fare,

cannot be expected to lend their aid in increasing the population by saving the lives of two-thirds of the children who now die prematurely in our great cities; and so still further overcrowding this unhappy land with those helpless and expensive sources of national poverty—rational human beings, in strength and health.

Moreover—and this point is worthy of serious attention—that school of political economy, which has now reached its full development, has taken all along a view of man's relation to nature diametrically opposite to that taken by the Sanitary Reformer, or indeed by any other men of science. The Sanitary Reformer holds, in common with the chemist or the engineer, that Nature is to be obeyed only in order to conquer her; that man is to discover the laws of her existing phenomena, in order that he may employ them to create new phenomena himself; to turn the laws which he discovers to his own use; if need be, to counteract one by another. In this power, it has seemed to them, lay his dignity as a rational being. It was this, the power of invention, which made him a progressive animal, not bound as the bird and the bee are, to build exactly as his forefathers built five thousand years ago.

By political economy alone has this faculty been denied to man. In it alone he is not to conquer nature,

but simply to obey her. Let her starve him, make him a slave, a bankrupt, or what not, he must submit, as the savage does to the hail and the lightning. 'Laissez-faire,' says the 'Science du néant,' the 'Science de la misère,' as it has truly and bitterly been called; 'Laissez-faire.' Analyse economic questions if you will: but, beyond analysis you shall not step. Any attempt to raise the political economy to its synthetic stage is to break the laws of nature, to fight against facts—as if facts were not made to be fought against and conquered, and put out of the way, whensoever they interfere in the least with the welfare of any human being. The drowning man is not to strike out for his life, lest by keeping his head above water he interfere with the laws of gravitation. Not that the political economist, or any man, can be true to his own fallacy. He must needs try his hand at the synthetic method, though he forbids it to the rest of the world: but the only deductive hint which he has as yet given to mankind is, quaintly enough, the most unnatural 'eidolon specûs' which ever entered the head of a dehumanized pedant—namely, that once famous 'Preventive Check,' which, if a nation did ever apply it—as it never will—could issue, as every doctor knows, in nothing less than the questionable habits of abortion, child-murder, and unnatural crime.

The only explanation of such conduct (though one which the men themselves will hardly accept) is this—that they secretly share somewhat in the doubt which many educated men have of the correctness of their inductions; that these same laws of political economy (where they leave the plain and safe subject-matter of trade) have been arrived at somewhat too hastily; that they are, in plain English, not quite sound enough

yet to build upon; and that we must wait for a few more facts before we begin any theories. Be it so. At least these men, in their present temper of mind, are not likely to be very useful to the Sanitary Reformer.

Would that these men, or the clergy had been the only bruised reed in which the Sanitary Reformers put their trust. They found another reed, however, and that was public opinion: but they forgot that (whatever the stump-orators may say about this being the age of electric thought, when truth flashes triumphant from pole to pole, &c.) we have no proof whatsoever that the proportion of fools is less in this generation than in those before it, or that truth, when unpalatable (as it almost always is), travels any faster than it did five hundred years ago. They forgot that every social improvement, and most mechanical ones, have had to make their way against laziness, ignorance, envy, vested wrongs, vested superstitions, and the whole vis inertiæ of the world, the flesh, and the devil. They were guilty indeed, in this case, not merely of ignorance of human nature, but of forgetfulness of fact. Did they not know that the excellent New Poor-law was greeted with the curses of those very farmers and squires who now not only carry it out lovingly and willingly to the very letter, but are often too ready to resist any improvement or relaxation in it which may be proposed by that very Poor-law Board from which it emanated? Did they not know that agricultural science, though of sixty years' steady growth, has not yet penetrated into a third of the farms of England; and that hundreds of farmers still dawdle on after the fashion of their forefathers, when by looking over the next hedge into their neighbour's field they might double their produce and

their profits? Did they not know that the adaptation of steam to machinery would have progressed just as slowly, had it not been a fact patent to babies that an engine is stronger than a horse; and that if cotton, like wheat and beef, had taken twelve months to manufacture, instead of five minutes, Manchester foresight would probably have been as short and as purblind as that of the British farmer? What right had they to expect a better reception for the facts of sanitary science? —facts which ought to, and ultimately will, disturb the vested interests of thousands, will put them to inconvenience, possibly at first to great expense; and yet facts which you can neither see nor handle, but must accept and pay hundreds of thousands of pounds for, on the mere word of a doctor or inspector who gets his living thereby. Poor John Bull! To expect that you would accept such a gospel cheerfully was indeed to expect too much!

But yet, though the public opinion of the mass could not be depended on, there was a body left, distinct from the mass, and priding itself so much on that distinctness that it was ready to say at times—of course in more courteous—at least in what it considered more Scriptural language—'This people which knoweth not the law is accursed.' To it therefore—to the religious world—some over-sanguine Sanitary Reformers turned their eyes. They saw in it ready organized (so it professed), for all good works, a body such as the world had never seen before. Where the religious public of Byzantium, Alexandria, or Rome numbered hundreds, that of England numbered its thousands. It was divided, indeed, on minor points, but it was surely united by the one aim of saving every man his own soul, and of professing the deepest reverence for

that Divine Book which tells men that the way to attain that aim is, to be good and to do good; and which contains among other commandments this one—'Thou shalt not kill.' Its wealth was enormous. It possest so much political power, that it would have been able to command elections, to compel ministries, to encourage the weak hearts of willing but fearful clergymen by fair hopes of deaneries and bishopries. Its members were no clique of unpractical fanatics, no men less. Though it might number among them a few martinet ex-post-captains, and noblemen of questionable sanity, capable of no more practical study than that of unfulfilled prophecy, the vast majority of them were landowners, merchants, bankers, commercial men of all ranks, full of worldly experience, and of the science of organization, skilled all their lives in finding and in employing men and money. What might not be hoped from such a body, to whom that commercial imperium in imperio of the French Protestants which the edict of Nantes destroyed was poor and weak? Add to this that these men's charities were boundless; that they were spending yearly, and on the whole spending wisely and well, ten times as much as ever was spent before in the world, on educational schemes, missionary schemes, church building, reformatories, ragged schools, needlewomen's charities—what not. No object of distress, it seemed, could be discovered, no fresh means of doing good devised, but these men's money poured bountifully and at once into that fresh channel, and an organization sprang up for the employment of that money, as thrifty and as handy as was to be expected from the money-holding classes of the great commercial nation.

What could not these men do? What were they

not bound by their own principles to do? No wonder that some weak men's hearts beat high at the thought. What if the religious world should take up the cause of Sanitary Reform? What if they should hail with joy a cause in which all, whatever their theological differences, might join in one sacred crusade against dirt, degradation, disease, and death? What if they should rise at the hustings to inquire of every candidate, 'Will you or will you not, pledge yourself to carry out Sanitary Reform in the place for which you are elected, and let the health and the lives of the local poor be that 'local interest' which you are bound by your election to defend? Do you confess your ignorance of the subject? Then know, Sir, that you are unfit, at this point of the nineteenth century, to be a member of the British Senate. You go thither to make laws 'for the preservation of life and property.' You confess yourself ignorant of those physical laws, stronger and wider than any which you can make, upon which all human life depends, by infringing which the whole property of a district is depreciated. Again, what might not the 'religious world,' and the public opinion of 'professing Christians,' have done in the last twenty—ay, in the last three years?

What it has done, is too patent to need comment here.

The reasons of so strange an anomaly are to be approached with caution. It is a serious thing to impute motives to a vast body of men, of whom the majority are really respectable, kind-hearted, and useful; and if in giving one's deliberate opinion one seems to blame them, let it be recollected that the blame lies not so much on them as on their teachers: on those who, for some reasons best known to themselves, have truckled

to, and even justified, the self-satisfied ignorance of a comfortable monied class.

But let it be said, and said boldly, that these men's conduct in the matter of sanitary reform seems at least to show that they value virtue, not for itself, but for its future rewards. To the great majority of these men (with some heroic exceptions, whose names may be written in no subscription list, but are surely written in the book of life) the great truth has never been revealed, that good is the one thing to be done, at all risks, for its own sake; that good is absolutely and infinitely better than evil, whether it pay or not to all eternity. Ask one of them. 'Is it better to do right and go to hell, or do wrong and go to heaven?'—they will look at you puzzled, half angry, suspecting you of some secret blasphemy, and, if hard prest, put off the new and startling question by saying, that it is absurd to talk of an impossible hypothesis. The human portion of their virtue is not mercenary, for they are mostly worthy men; the religious part thereof, that which they keep for Sundays and for charitable institutions, is too often mercenary, though they know it not. Their religion is too often one of 'loss and gain,' as much as Father Newman's own; and their actions, whether they shall call them 'good works' or 'fruits of faith,' are so much spiritual capital, to be repaid with interest at the last day.

Therefore, like all religionists, they are most anxious for those schemes of good which seem most profitable to themselves and to the denomination to which they belong; and the best of all such works is, of course, as with all religionists, the making of proselytes. They really care for the bodies, but still they care more for the souls, of those whom they assist—and not

wrongly either, were it not that to care for a man's soul usually means, in the religious world, to make him think with you; at least to lay him under such obligations as to give you spiritual power over him. Therefore it is that all religious charities in England are more and more conducted, just as much as those of Jesuits and Oratorians, with an ulterior view of proselytism; therefore it is that the religious world, though it has invented, perhaps, no new method of doing good; though it has been indebted for educational movements, prison visitations, infant schools, ragged schools, and so forth, to Quakers, cobblers, even in some cases to men whom they call infidels, have gladly adopted each and every one of them, as fresh means of enlarging the influence or the numbers of their own denominations, and of baiting for the body in order to catch the soul. A fair sample of too much of their labour may be seen anywhere, in those tracts in which the prettiest stories, with the prettiest binding and pictures, on the most secular—even, sometimes, scientific—of subjects, end by a few words of pious exhortation, inserted by a different hand from that which indites the carnal mass of the book. They did not invent the science, or the art of story-telling, or the woodcutting, or the plan of getting books up prettily—or, indeed, the notion of instructing the masses at all; but finding these things in the hands of 'the world,' they have 'spoiled the Egyptians,' and fancy themselves beating Satan with his own weapons.

If, indeed, these men claimed boldly all printing, all woodcutting, all story-telling, all human arts and sciences, as gifts from God himself; and said, as the book which they quote so often says, 'The Spirit of God gives man understanding, these, too, are His gifts, sacred, miraculous, to be accounted for to Him;'

then they would be consistent; and then, too, they would have learnt, perhaps, to claim sanitary science for a gift divine as any other: but nothing, alas! is as yet further from their creed. And therefore it is that sanitary reform finds so little favour in their eyes. You have so little in it to show for your work. You may think you have saved the lives of hundreds; but you cannot put your finger on one of them: and they know you not; know not even their own danger, much less your beneficence. Therefore, you have no lien on them, not even that of gratitude; you cannot say to a man, 'I have prevented you having typhus, therefore you must attend my chapel.' No! sanitary reform makes no proselytes. It cannot be used as a religious engine. It is too simply human, too little a respecter of persons, too like to the works of Him who causes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and His rain to fall on the just and on the unjust, and is good to the unthankful and to the evil, to find much favour in the eyes of a generation which will compass sea and land to make one proselyte.

Yes. Too like the works of our Father in heaven, as indeed all truly natural and human science needs must be. True, to those who believed that there is a Father in heaven, this would, one supposes, be the highest recommendation. But how many of this generation believe that? Is not their doctrine, the doctrine to testify for which the religious world exists, the doctrine which if you deny, you are met with one universal frown and snarl—that man has no Father in heaven: but that if he becomes a member of the religious world, by processes varying with each denomination, he may—strange paradox—create a Father for himself?

But so it is. The religious world has lost the belief which even the elder Greeks and Romans had,

of a 'Zeus, Father of gods and men.' Even that it has lost. Therefore have man, and the simple human needs of man, no sacredness in their eyes; therefore is nature to them no longer 'the will of God exprest in facts,' and to break a law of nature no longer to sin against him who 'looked on all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.' And yet they read their Bibles, and believe that they believe in Him who stood by the lake-side in Galilee, and told men that not a sparrow fell to the ground without their Father's knowledge—and that they were of more value than many sparrows. Do those words now seem to some so self-evident as to be needless? They will never seem so to the Sanitary Reformer, who has called on the 'British Public' to exert themselves in saving the lives of thousands yearly; and has received practical answers which will furnish many a bitter jest for the Voltaire of the next so-called 'age of unbelief,' or fill a sad, but an instructive chapter in some future enlarged edition of Adelung's 'History of Human Folly.'

All but despairing, Sanitary Reformers have turned again and again to her Majesty's Government. Alas for them. The Government was ready and willing enough to help. The wicked world said 'Of course. It will create a new department. It will give them more places to bestow:' but the real reason of the willingness of Government seems to be that those who compose it are thoroughly awake to the importance of the subject.

But what can a poor Government do, whose strength consists (as that of all English Governments must) in not seeming too strong; which is allowed to do anything, only on condition of doing the minimum? Of course, a government is morally bound to keep itself in existence; for is it not bound to believe that it can

govern the country better than any other knot of men? But its only chance of self-preservation is to know, with Hesiod's wise man, 'how much better the half is than the whole,' and to throw over many a measure which it would like to carry, for the sake of saving the few which it can carry.

An English Government, now-a-days, is simply at the mercy of the forty or fifty members of the House of Commons who are crotchety enough or dishonest enough to put it unexpectedly in a minority; and they, with the vast majority of the House, are becoming more and more the delegates of that very class which is most opposed to sanitary reform. The honourable member goes to Parliament not to express his opinions (for he has stated most distinctly at the last election that he has no opinions whatsoever), but to protect the local interests of his constituents. And the great majority of those constituents are small houseowners—the poorer portion of the middle class. Were he to support Government in anything like a sweeping measure of sanitary reform, woe to his seat at the next election; and he knows it; and therefore, even if he allow the Government to have its Central Board of Health, he will take good care, for his own sake, that the said Board shall not do too much, and that it shall not compel his constituents to do anything at all.

No wonder, that while the attitude of the House of Commons is such toward a matter which involves the lives of thousands yearly, some educated men should be crying that representative institutions are on their trial, and should sigh for a strong despotism.

There is an answer, nevertheless, to such sentimentalists, and one hopes that people will see the answer for themselves, and that the infection of Imperialism,

which seems spreading somewhat rapidly, will be stopped by common sense and honest observation of facts.

A despotism doubtless could carry out sanitary reform: but doubtless, also, it would not.

A despot in the nineteenth century knows well how insecure his tenure is. His motto must be, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;' and, therefore, the first objects of his rule will be, private luxury and a standing army; while, if he engage in public works, for the sake of keeping the populace quiet, they will be certain not to be such as will embroil him with the middle classes, while they will win him no additional favour with the masses, utterly unaware of their necessity. Would the masses of Paris have thanked Louis Napoleon the more if, instead of completing the Tuileries, he had sewered the St. Antoine? All arguments to the contrary are utterly fallacious, which are drawn from ancient despotisms, Roman, Eastern, Peruvian, or other; and for this simple reason, that they had no middle class. If they did work well (which is a question), it was just because they had no middle class—that class, which in a free State, is the very life of a nation, and yet which, in a despotism, is sure to be the root of its rottenness. For a despot who finds, as Louis Napoleon has done, a strong middle class already existing, must treat it as he does; he must truckle to it, pander to its basest propensities, seem to make himself its tool, in order that he may make it his. For the sake of his own life, he must do it; and were a despot to govern England to-morrow, we should see that the man who was shrewd enough to have climbed to that bad eminence, would be shrewd enough to know that he could scarcely commit a more

suicidal act than, by some despotic measure of sanitary reform to excite the ill-will of all the most covetous, the most stupid, and the most stubborn men in every town of England.

There is another answer, too, to 'Imperialists' who talk of Representative institutions being on their trial, and let it be made boldly just now.

It will be time to talk of representative institutions being good or bad, when the people of England are properly represented.

In the first place, it does seem only fair that the class who suffer most from epidemics should have some little share in the appointment of the men on whose votes extermination of epidemics now mainly depends. But that is too large a question to argue here. Let the Government see to it in the coming session.

Yet how much soever, or how little soever, the suffrage be extended in the direction of the working man, let it be extended, at least in some equal degree, in the direction of the educated man. Few bodies in England now express the opinions of educated men less than does the present House of Commons. It is not chosen by educated men, any more than it is by proletaires. It is not, on an average, composed of educated men; and the many educated men who are in it have, for the most part, to keep their knowledge very much to themselves, for fear of hurting the feelings of 'ten-pound Jack,' or of the local attorney who looks after Jack's vote. And therefore the House of Commons does not represent public opinion.

For, to enounce with fitting clearness a great but much forgotten truth, To have an opinion, you must have an opinion.

Strange: but true, and pregnant too. For, from it

may be deduced this corollary, that nine-tenths of what is called public opinion is no opinion at all; for on the matters which come under the cognizance of the House of Commons (save where superstition, as in the case of the Sabbath, or the Jew Bill, sets folks thinking—generally on the wrong side), nine people out of ten have no opinion at all; know nothing about the matter, and care less; wherefore, having no opinions to be represented, it is not important whether that nothing be represented or not.

The true public opinion of England is composed of the opinions of the shrewd, honest, practical men in her, whether educated or not; and of such, thank God, there are millions: but it consists also of the opinions of the educated men in her; men who have had leisure and opportunity for study; who have some chance of knowing the future, because they have examined the past; who can compare England with other nations, English creeds, laws, customs, with those of the rest of mankind; who know somewhat of humanity, human progress, human existence; who have been practised in the processes of thought; and who, from study, have formed definite opinions, differing doubtless in infinite variety, but still, all founded upon facts, by something like fair and scientific induction.

Till we have this class of men fairly represented in the House of Commons, there is little hope for sanitary reform: when it is so represented, we shall have no reason to talk of representative institutions being on their trial.

And it is one of the few hopeful features of the present time, that an attempt is at last being made to secure for educated men of all professions a fair territorial representation. A memorial to the Government has been presented, appended to which, in very great

numbers, are the names of men of note, of all ranks, all shades in politics and religion, all professions, legal, clerical, military, medical, and literary. A list of names representing so much intellect, so much learning, so much acknowledged moderation, so much good work already done and acknowledged by the country, has never, perhaps, been collected for any political purpose; and if their scheme (the details of which are not yet made public) should in anywise succeed, it will do more for the prospects of sanitary reform than any forward movement of the last quarter of a century.

For if sanitary reform, or perhaps any really progressive measure, is to be carried out henceforth, we must go back to something like the old principle of the English constitution, by which intellect, as such, had its proper share in the public councils. During those middle ages when all the intellect and learning was practically possest by the clergy, they constituted a separate estate of the realm. This was the old plan—the best which could be then devised. After learning became common to the laity, the educated classes were represented more and more only by such clever young men as could be thrust into Parliament by the private patronage of the aristocracy. Since the last Reform Bill, even that supply of talent has been cut off; and the consequence has been, the steady deterioration of our House of Commons toward such a level of mediocrity as shall satisfy the ignorance of the practically electing majority, namely, the tail of the middle class; men who are apt to possess all the failings with few of the virtues of those above them and below them; who have no more intellectual training than the simple working man, and far less than the average shopman, and who yet lose, under the influence of a small competence, that practical training which gives to the

working man, made strong by wholesome necessity, chivalry, endurance, courage, and self-restraint; whose business morality is made up of the lowest and narrowest maxims of the commercial world, unbalanced by that public spirit, that political knowledge, that practical energy, that respect for the good opinion of his fellows, which elevate the large employer. On the hustings, of course, this description of the average free and independent elector would be called a calumny; and yet, where is the member of Parliament who will not, in his study, assent to its truth, and confess, that of all men whom he meets, those who least command his respect are those among his constituents to secure whom he takes most trouble; unless, indeed, it be the pettifoggers who manage his election for him?

Whether this is the class to whose public opinion the health and lives of the masses are to be entrusted, is a question which should be settled as soon as possible.

Meanwhile let every man who would awake to the importance of sanitary questions, do his best to teach and preach, in season and out of season, and to instruct, as far as he can, that public opinion which is as yet but public ignorance. Let him throw, for instance, what weight he has into the 'National Association for the Advancement of Social Science.' In it he will learn, as well as teach, not only on sanitary reforms, but upon those cognate questions which must be considered with it, if it is ever to be carried out.

Indeed, this new 'National Association' seems the most hopeful and practical move yet made by the sanitarists. It may be laughed at somewhat at first, as the British Association was; but the world will find after a while that, like the British Association, it can do great things towards moulding public opinion, and

compel men to consider certain subjects, simply by accustoming people to hear them mentioned. The Association will not have existed in vain, if it only removes that dull fear and suspicion with which Englishmen are apt to regard a new subject, simply because it is new. But the Association will do far more than that. It has wisely not confined itself to any one branch of social science, but taken the subject in all its complexity. To do otherwise, would have been to cripple itself. It would have shut out many subjects—Law Reform, for instance—which are necessary adjuncts to any sanitary scheme; while it would have shut out that very large class of benevolent people who have as yet been devoting their energies to prisons, workhouses, and schools. Such will now have an opportunity of learning that they have been treating the symptoms of social disease rather than the disease itself. They will see that vice is rather the effect than the cause of physical misery, and that the surest mode of attacking it, is to improve the physical conditions of the lower classes; to abolish foul air, fouled water, foul lodging, and overcrowded dwellings, in which morality is difficult, and common decency impossible. They will not give up—Heaven forbid that they should give up—their special good works! but they will surely throw the weight of their names, their talents, their earnestness, into the great central object of preserving human life, as soon as they shall have recognised that prevention is better than cure; and that the simple and one method of prevention is, to give the working man his rights. Water, air, light. A right to these three at least he has. In demanding them, he demands no more than God gives freely to the wild beast of the forest. Till society has given him them, it does him an injustice in demanding of

him that he should be a useful member of society. If he is expected to be a man, let him at least be put on a level with the brutes. When the benevolent of the land (and they may be numbered by tens of thousands) shall once have learnt this plain and yet awful truth, a vast upward step will have been gained. Because this new Association will teach it them, during the next ten or twenty years, may God's blessing be on it, and on the noble old man who presides over it. Often already has he deserved well of his country; but never better than now, when he has lent his great name and great genius to the object of preserving human life from wholesale destruction by unnecessary poison.

And meanwhile let the sanitary reformer work and wait. 'Go not after the world,' said a wise man, 'for it thou stand still long enough, the world will come round to thee.' And to sanitary reform the world will come round at last. Grumbling, scoffing, cursing its benefactors; boasting at last, as usual, that it discovered for itself the very truths which it tried to silence, it will come; and will be glad at last to accept the one sibylline leaf, at the same price at which it might have had the whole. The Sanitary reformer must make up his mind to see no fruit of his labours, much less thanks or reward. He must die in faith, as St. Paul says all true men die, 'not having received the promises;' worn out, perhaps, by ill-paid and unappreciated labour, as that truest-hearted and most unselfish of men, Charles Robert Walsh, died but two years ago. But his works will follow him—not, as the preachers tell him, to heaven—for of what use would they be there, to him or to mankind?—but here on earth, where he set them, that they might go on in his path, after his example, and prosper and triumph long years after he is dead, when his memory shall be blessed

by generations not merely 'yet unborn,' but who never would have been born at all, had he not inculcated into their unwilling fathers the simplest laws of physical health, decency, life—laws which the wild cat of the wood, burying its own excrement apart from its lair, has learnt by the light of nature; but which neither nature nor God himself can as yet teach to a selfish, perverse, and hypocritical generation.

MY WINTER-GARDEN.*

SO, my friend: you ask me to tell you how I contrive to support this monotonous country life; how, fond as I am of excitement, adventure, society, scenery, art, literature, I go cheerfully through the daily routine of a commonplace country profession, never requiring a six-weeks' holiday: not caring to see the Continent, hardly even to spend a day in London; having never yet actually got to Paris.

You wonder why I do not grow dull as those round me, whose talk is of bullocks—as indeed mine is often enough; why I am not by this time 'all over blue mould;' why I have not been tempted to bury myself in my study, and live a life of dreams among old books.

I will tell you. I am a minute philosopher. I am possibly, after all, a man of small mind, content with small pleasures. So much the better for me. Meanwhile, I can understand your surprise, though you cannot understand my content. You have played a greater game than mine; have lived a life, perhaps more fit for an Englishman; certainly more in accordance with the taste of our common fathers, the Vikings, and their patron Odin 'the goer,' father of all them that go ahead. You have gone ahead, and over many lands; and I reverence you for it, though I envy you not. You have commanded a regiment—indeed an army, and 'drank delight of battle with your peers;'

* Fraser's Magazine, January, 1858.

you have ruled provinces, and done justice and judgment, like a noble Englishman as you are, old friend, among thousands who never knew before what justice and judgment were. You have tasted (and you have deserved to taste) the joy of old David's psalm, when he has hunted down the last of the robber lords of Palestine. You have seen 'a people whom you have not known, serve you. As soon as they heard of you, they obeyed you; but the strange children dissembled with you:' yet before you, too, 'the strange children failed, and trembled in their hill-forts.'

Noble work that was to do, and nobly you have done it; and I do not wonder that to a man who has been set to such a task, and given power to carry it through, all smaller work must seem paltry; that such a man's very amusements, in that grand Indian land, and that free adventurous Indian life, exciting the imagination, calling out all the self-help and daring of a man, should have been on a par with your work; that when you go a sporting, you ask for no meaner preserve than the primæval forest, no lower park wall than the snow-peaks of the Himalaya.

Yes; you have been a 'burra Shikarree' as well as a 'burra Sahib.' You have played the great game in your work, and killed the great game in your play. How many tons of mighty monsters have you done to death, since we two were schoolboys together, five-and-twenty years ago? How many starving villages have you fed with the flesh of elephant or buffalo? How many have you delivered from man-eating tigers, or wary old alligators, their craws full of poor girls' bangles? Have you not been charged by rhinoceroses, all but ript up by boars? Have you not seen face to face Ovis Ammon himself, the giant mountain sheep—primæval ancestor, perhaps, of all the flocks on earth?

Your memories must be like those of Theseus and Hercules, full of slain monsters. Your brains must be one fossiliferous deposit, in which gaur and samburr, hog and tiger, rhinoceros and elephant, lie heaped together, as the old ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs are heaped in the lias rocks at Lyme. And therefore I like to think of you. I try to picture your feelings to myself. I spell over with my boy Mayne Reid's delightful books, or the 'Old Forest Ranger,' or Williams's old 'Tiger Book,' with Howitt's plates, and try to realize the glory of a burra Shikarree; and as I read and imagine, feel with Sir Hugh Evans, 'a great disposition to cry.'

For there were times, full many a year ago, when my brains were full of bison and grizzly bear, mustang and big-horn, Blackfoot and Pawnee, and hopes of wild adventure in the Far West, which I shall never see; for ere I was three-and-twenty, I discovered, plainly enough, that my lot was to stay at home and earn my bread in a very quiet way; that England was to be henceforth my prison or my palace, as I should choose to make it; and I have made it, by Heaven's help, the latter.

I will confess to you, though, that in those first heats of youth, this little England—or rather, this little patch of moor in which I have struck roots as firm as the wild fir-trees do—looked at moments rather like a prison than a palace; that my foolish young heart would sigh, 'Oh! that I had wings'—not as a dove, to fly home to its nest and croodle there—but as an eagle, to swoop away over land and sea, in a rampant and self-glorifying fashion, on which I now look back as altogether unwholesome and undesirable. But the thirst for adventure and excitement was strong in me, as perhaps it ought to be in all at twenty-one. Others

went out to see the glorious new worlds of the West, the glorious old worlds of the East—why should not I? Others rambled over Alps and Apennines, Italian picture-galleries and palaces, filling their minds with fair memories—why should not I? Others discovered new wonders in botany and zoology—why should not I? Others too, like you, fulfilled to the utmost that strange lust after the burra shikar, which even now makes my pulse throb as often as I see the stags' heads in our friend A——'s hall: why should not I? It is not learnt in a day, the golden lesson of the Old Collect, to 'love the thing which is commanded, and desire that which is promised.' Not in a day: but in fifteen years one can spell out a little of its worth; and when one finds one's self on the wrong side of forty, and the first grey hairs begin to show on the temples, and one can no longer jump as high as one's third button—scarcely, alas! to any button at all; and what with innumerable sprains, bruises, soakings, and chillings, one's lower limbs feel in a cold thaw much like an old post-horse's, why, one makes a virtue of necessity: and if one still lusts after sights, takes the nearest, and looks for wonders, not in the Himalayas or Lake Ngami, but in the turf on the lawn and the brook in the park; and with good Alphonse Karr enjoys the macro-microcosm in one Tour autour de mon jardin.

For there it is, friend, the whole infinite miracle of nature in every tuft of grass, if we have only eyes to see it, and can disabuse our minds of that tyrannous phantom of size. Only recollect that great and small are but relative terms; that in truth nothing is great or small, save in proportion to the quantity of creative thought which has been exercised in making it; that the fly who basks upon one of the trilithons of Stonehenge, is in truth infinitely greater than all Stonehenge

together, though he may measure the tenth of an inch, and the stone on which he sits five-and-twenty feet. You differ from me? Be it so. Even if you prove me wrong I will believe myself in the right: I cannot afford to do otherwise. If you rob me of my faith in 'minute philosophy,' you rob me of a continual source of content, surprise, delight.

So go your way and I mine, each working with all his might, and playing with all his might, in his own place and way. Remember only that though I never can come round to your sphere, you must some day come round to me, when wounds, or weariness, or merely, as I hope, a healthy old age, shall shut you out for once and for all from burra shikar, whether human or quadruped.—For you surely will not take to politics in your old age? I shall not surely live to see you (as I saw many a fine fellow—woe's me!—last year) soliciting the votes, not of the people, but of the snobocracy, on the ground of your having neither policy, nor principles, nor even opinions, upon any matter in heaven or earth?—Then in that day will you be forced, my friend, to do what I have done this many a year; to refrain your soul, and keep it low. You will see more and more the depth of human ignorance, the vanity of human endeavours. You will feel more and more that the world is going God's way, and not yours, or mine, or any man's; and that if you have been allowed to do good work on earth, that work is probably as different from what you fancy it as the tree is from the seed whence it springs. You will grow content, therefore, not to see the real fruit of your labours; because if you saw it you would probably be frightened at it, and what is very good in the eyes of God would not be very good in yours; and content, also, to receive your discharge, and work and fight no more, sure that God is working and fighting, whether

you are in hospital or in the field. And with this growing sense of the pettiness of human struggles will grow on you a respect for simple labours, a thankfulness for simple pleasures, a sympathy with simple people, and possibly, my trusty friend, with me and my little tours about that moorland which I call my winter-garden, and which is to me as full of glory and of instruction as the Himalaya or the Punjab are to you, and in which I contrive to find as much health and amusement as I have time for—and who ought to have more?

I call the said garden mine, not because I own it in any legal sense (for only in a few acres have I a life interest), but in that higher sense in which ten thousand people can own the same thing, and yet no man's right interfere with another's. To whom does the Apollo Belvedere belong, but to all who have eyes to see its beauty? So does my winter-garden; and therefore to me among the rest.

And there (which is a gain to a poor man) my pleasure in it is a very cheap one. So are all those of a minute philosopher, except his microscope. But my winter-garden, which is far larger, at all events, than that famous one at Chatsworth, costs me not one penny in keeping up. Poor, did I call myself? Is it not true wealth to have all I want without paying for it? Is it not true wealth, royal wealth, to have some twenty gentlemen, and noblemen, nay, even royal personages, planting and improving for me? Is it not more than royal wealth to have sun and frost, gulf-stream and south-westers, laws of geology, phytology, physiology, and other ologies—in a word, the whole universe and the powers thereof, day and night, paving, planting, roofing, lighting, colouring my winter-garden for me, without my even having the trouble to rub a magic ring and tell the genie to go to work?

Yes. I am very rich, as every man may be who will. In the doings of our little country neighbourhood I find tragedy and comedy, too fantastic, sometimes too sad, to be written down. In the words of those whose talk is of bullocks, I find the materials of all possible metaphysic, and long weekly that I had time to work them out. In fifteen miles of moorland I find the materials of all possible physical science, and long, too, that I had time to work out one smallest segment of that great sphere. How can I be richer, if I have lying at my feet all day a thousand times more wealth than I can use?

Some people—most people—in these run-about railway days, would complain of such a life, in such a 'narrow sphere,' so they call it, as monotonous. Very likely it is so. But is it to be complained of on that account? Is monotony in itself an evil? Which is better, to know many places ill, or to know one place well? Certainly—if a scientific habit of mind be a gain—it is only by exhausting as far as possible the significance of an individual phenomenon (is not that sentence a truly scientific one in its magniloquence?) that you can discover any glimpse of the significance of the universal. Even men of boundless knowledge, like Humboldt, must have had once their speciality, their pet subject, or they would have, strictly speaking, no knowledge at all. The volcanos of Mexico, patiently and laboriously investigated in his youth, were to Humboldt, possibly, the key of the whole Cosmos. I learn more, studying over and over again the same Bagshot sand and gravel heaps, than I should by roaming all Europe in search of new geologic wonders. Fifteen years have I been puzzling at the same questions and have only guessed at a few of the answers. What sawed out the edges of the moors into long

narrow banks of gravel? What cut them off all flat atop? What makes Erica ciliaris grow in one soil, and the bracken in another? How did three species of Club-moss—one of them quite an Alpine one—get down here, all the way from Wales perhaps, upon this isolated patch of gravel? Why did that one patch of Carex arenaria settle in the only square yard for miles and miles which bore sufficient resemblance to its native sandhill by the seashore, to make it comfortable? Why did Myosurus minimus, which I had hunted for in vain for fourteen years, appear by dozens in the fifteenth, upon a new-made bank, which had been for at least for two hundred years a farm-yard gateway? Why does it generally rain here from the south-west, not when the barometer falls, but when it begins to rise again? Why—why is everything, which lies under my feet all day long? I don't know; and you can't tell me. And till I have found out, I cannot complain of monotony, with still undiscovered puzzles waiting to be explained, and so to create novelty at every turn.

Besides, monotony is pleasant in itself; morally pleasant, and morally useful. Marriage is monotonous: but there is much, I trust, to be said in favour of holy wedlock. Living in the same house is monotonous: but three removes, say the wise, are as bad as a fire. Locomotion is regarded as an evil by our Litany. The Litany, as usual, is right. 'Those who travel by land or sea' are to be objects of our pity and our prayers; and I do pity them. I delight in that same monotony. It saves curiosity, anxiety, excitement, disappointment, and a host of bad passions. It gives a man the blessed invigorating feeling that he is at home; that he has roots, deep and wide, struck down into all he sees; and that only the being who will do nothing cruel or useless can tear them up. It is pleasant to look down

on the same parish day after day, and say, I know all that lies beneath, and all beneath know me. If I want a friend, I know where to find him; if I want work done, I know who will do it. It is pleasant and good to see the same trees year after year; the same birds coming back in spring to the same shrubs; the same banks covered with the same flowers, and broken (if they be stiff ones) by the same gaps. Pleasant and good it is to ride the same horse, to sit in the same chair, to wear the same old coat. That man who offered twenty pounds reward for a lost carpet-bag full of old boots was a sage, and I wish I knew him. Why should one change one's place, any more than one's wife or one's children? Is a hermit-crab, slipping his tail out of one strange shell into another, in the hopes of its fitting him a little better, either a dignified, safe, or graceful animal? No; George Riddler was a true philosopher.

> Let vules go sarching vur and nigh,
> We bides at Whum, my dog and I;

and become there, not only wiser, but more charitable; for the oftener one sees, the better one knows; and the better one knows, the more one loves.

It is an easy philosophy; especially in the case of the horse, where a man cannot afford more than one, as I cannot. To own a stud of horses, after all, is not to own horses at all, but riding-machines. Your rich man who rides Crimœa in the morning, Sir Guy in the afternoon, and Sultan to-morrow, and something else the next day, may be a very gallant rider: but it is a question whether he enjoys the pleasure which one horse gives to the poor man who rides him day after day; one horse, who is not a slave, but a friend; who has learnt all his tricks of voice, hand, heel, and knows what his master wants, even without being told; who will bear with his

master's infirmities, and feels secure that his master will bear with his in turn.

Possibly, after all, the grapes are sour; and were one rich, one would do even as the rich are wont: but still, I am a minute philosopher. And therefore, this afternoon, after I have done the same work, visited the same people, and said the same words to them, which I have done for years past, and shall I trust, for many a year to come, I shall go wandering out into the same winter-garden on the same old mare; and think the same thoughts, and see the same fir-trees, and meet perhaps the same good fellows hunting of their fox, as I have done with full content this many a year; and rejoice, as I said before, in my own boundless wealth, who have the whole universe to look at, without being charged one penny for the show.

As I have said, the grapes may be sour, and I enjoy the want of luxuries only because I cannot get them; but if my self-deception be useful to me, leave it alone.

No one is less inclined to depreciate that magnificent winter-garden at the Crystal Palace: yet let me, if I choose, prefer my own; I argue that, in the first place, it is far larger. You may drive, I hear, through that grand one at Chatsworth for a quarter of a mile. You may ride through mine for fifteen miles on end. I prefer, too, to any glass roof which Sir Joseph Paxton ever planned, that dome above my head some three miles high, of soft dappled grey and yellow cloud, through the vast lattice-work whereof the blue sky peeps, and sheds down tender gleams on yellow bogs and softly rounded heather knolls, and pale chalk-ranges gleaming far away. But, above all, I glory in my evergreens. What winter-garden can compare for them with mine? True I have but four kinds—Scotch fir, holly, furze, and the heath; and by way of relief to

them, only brows of brown fern, sheets of yellow bog-grass, and here and there a leafless birch, whose purple tresses are even more lovely to my eye than those fragrant green ones which she puts on in spring. Well: in painting as in music, what effects are more grand than those produced by the scientific combination, in endless new variety, of a few simple elements? Enough for me is the one purple birch; the bright hollies round its stem sparkling with scarlet beads; the furze-patch, rich with its lacework of interwoven light and shade, tipped here and there with a golden bud; the deep soft heather carpet, which invites you to lie down and dream for hours; and behind all, the wall of red fir-stems, and the dark fir-roof with its jagged edges a mile long, against the soft grey sky.

An ugly straight-edged, monotonous fir plantation? Well, I like it, outside and inside. I need no saw-edge of mountain peaks to stir up my imagination with the sense of the sublime, while I can watch the saw-edge of those fir peaks against the red sunset. They are my Alps; little ones it may be: but after all, as I asked before, what is size? A phantom of our brain; an optical delusion. Grandeur, if you will consider wisely, consists in form, and not in size: and to the eye of the philosopher, the curve drawn on a paper two inches long, is just as magnificent, just as symbolic of divine mysteries and melodies, as when embodied in the span of some cathedral roof. Have you eyes to see? Then lie down on the grass, and look near enough to see something more of what is to be seen; and you will find tropic jungles in every square foot of turf; mountain cliffs and debacles at the mouth of every rabbit burrow: dark strids, tremendous cataracts, 'deep glooms and sudden glories,' in every foot-broad rill which wanders through the turf. All is there for you

to see, if you will but rid yourself of 'that idol of space;' and nature, as every one will tell you who has seen dissected an insect under the microscope, as grand and graceful in her smallest as in her hugest forms.

The March breeze is chilly: but I can be always warm if I like in my winter-garden. I turn my horse's head to the red wall of fir stems, and leap over the furze-grown bank into my cathedral; (wherein, if there be no saints, there are likewise no priestcraft and no idols;)—but endless vistas of smooth red, green-veined shafts holding up the warm dark roof, lessening away into endless gloom—paved with rich brown fir-needle—a carpet at which Nature has been at work for forty years. Red shafts, green roof, and here and there a pane of blue sky—neither Owen Jones nor Willement can improve upon that ecclesiastical ornamentation,—while for incense I have the fresh healthy turpentine fragrance, far sweeter to my nostrils than the stifling narcotic odour which fills a Roman Catholic cathedral. There is not a breath of air within: but the breeze sighs over the roof above in a soft whisper. I shut my eyes and listen. Surely that is the murmur of the summer sea upon the summer sands in Devon far away. I hear the innumerable wavelets spend themselves gently upon the shore, and die away to rise again. And with the innumerable wave-sighs come innumerable memories, and faces which I shall never see again upon this earth. I will not tell even you of that, old friend.

It has two notes, two keys rather, that Eolian-harp of fir-needles above my head; according as the wind is east or west, the needles dry or wet. This easterly key of to-day is shriller, more cheerful, warmer in sound, though the day itself be colder: but grander still, as well as softer, is the sad soughing key in which the south-west wind roars on, rain-laden, over the

forest, and calls me forth—being a minute philosopher —to catch trout in the nearest chalk-stream.

The breeze is gone awhile; and I am in perfect silence—a silence which may be heard. Not a sound; and not a moving object; absolutely none. The absence of animal life is solemn, startling. That ring-dove, who was cooing half-a-mile away, has hushed his moan; that flock of long-tailed titmice, which were twinging and pecking about the fir-cones a few minutes since, are gone; and now there is not even a gnat to quiver in the slant sun-rays. Did a spider run over these dead leaves, I almost fancy I could hear his foot-fall. The creaking of the saddle, the soft footfall of the mare upon the fir-needles, jar my ears. I seem alone in a dead world. A dead world: and yet so full of life, if I had eyes to see! Above my head every fir-needle is breathing—breathing for ever, and currents unnumbered circulate in every bough, quickened by some undiscovered miracle; around me every fir-stem is distilling strange juices, which no laboratory of man can make; and where my dull eye sees only death, the eye of God sees boundless life and motion, health and use.

Slowly I wander on beneath the warm roof of the winter-garden, and meditate upon that one word—Life; and specially on all that Mr. Lewes has written so well thereon of late—for instance—

> We may consider Life itself as an ever-increasing identification with Nature. The simple cell, from which the plant or animal arises, must draw light and heat from the sun, nutriment from the surrounding world, or else it will remain quiescent, not alive, though latent with life; as the grains in the Egyptian tombs, which after lying thousands of years in those sepulchres, are placed in the earth, and smile forth as golden wheat. What we call growth, is it not a perpetual absorption of Nature, the identification of the individual with the universal? And may we not, in speculative moods, consider Death as the grand impatience of the soul to free itself from the circle of individual activity—the yearning of the creature to be united with the Creator?

As with Life, so with knowledge, which is intellectual life. In the early days of man's history, Nature and her marvellous ongoings were regarded with but a casual and careless eye, or else with the merest wonder. It was late before profound and reverent study of her laws could wean man from impatient speculations; and now, what is our intellectual activity based on, except on the more thorough mental absorption of Nature? When that absorption is completed, the mystic drama will be sunny clear, and all Nature's processes be visible to man, as a Divine Effluence and Life.

True; yet not all the truth. But who knows all the truth?

Not I. 'We see through a glass darkly,' said St. Paul of old; and what is more, dazzle and weary our eyes, like clumsy microscopists, by looking too long and earnestly through the imperfect and by no means achromatic lens. Enough. I will think of something else. I will think of nothing at all—

Stay. There was a sound at last; a light footfall.

A hare races towards us through the ferns, her great bright eyes full of terror, her ears aloft to catch some sound behind. She sees us, turns short, and vanishes into the gloom. The mare pricks up her ears too, listens, and looks: but not the way the hare has gone. There is something more coming; I can trust the finer sense of the horse, to which (and no wonder) the Middle Age attributed the power of seeing ghosts and fairies impalpable to man's gross eyes. Beside, that hare was not travelling in search of food. She was not 'loping' along, looking around her right and left, but galloping steadily. She has been frightened: she has been put up: but what has put her up? And there, far away among the fir-stems, rings the shriek of a startled blackbird. What has put him up?

That, old mare, at sight whereof your wise eyes widen till they are ready to burst, and your ears are first shot forward towards your nose, and then laid back with vicious intent. Stand still, old woman! Do you

think still, after fifteen winters, that you can catch a fox?

A fox it is indeed; a great dog-fox, as red as the fir-stems between which he glides. And yet his legs are black with fresh peat stains. He is a hunted fox: but he has not been up long.

The mare stands like a statue: but I can feel her trembling between my knees. Positively he does not see us. He sits down in the middle of a ride, turns his great ears right and left, and then scratches one of them with his hind foot, seemingly to make it hear the better. Now he is up again and on.

Beneath yon firs, some hundred yards away, standeth, or rather lieth, for it is on dead flat ground, the famous castle of Malepartus, which beheld the base murder of Lampe, the hare, and many a seely soul beside. I know it well; a patch of sand heaps, mingled with great holes, amid the twining fir roots; ancient home of the last of the wild beasts. And thither, unto Malepartus safe and strong, trots Reinecke, where he hopes to be snug among the labyrinthine windings, and innumerable starting-holes, as the old apologue has it, of his ballium, covert-way, and donjon keep. Full blown in self-satisfaction he trots, lifting his toes delicately, and carrying his brush aloft, as full of cunning and conceit as that world-famous ancestor of his, whose deeds of unchivalry were the delight, if not the model, of knight and kaiser, lady and burgher, in the Middle Age.

Suddenly he halts at the great gate of Malepartus; examines it with his nose; goes on to a postern; examines that also, and then another, and another: while I perceive afar, projecting from every cave's mouth, the red and green end of a new fir-faggot. Ah, Reinecke! fallen is thy conceit, and fallen thy tail therewith. Thou

hast worst foes to deal with than Bruin the bear, or Isegrim the wolf, or any foolish brute whom thy great ancestor outwitted. Man the many-counselled has been beforehand with thee; and the earths are stopped.

One moment he sits down to meditate, and scratches those trusty counsellors, his ears, as if he would tear them off, 'revolving swift thoughts in a crafty mind.'

He has settled it now. He is up and off—and at what a pace! Out of the way, Fauns and Hamadryads, if any be left in the forest. What a pace! And with what a grace beside!

Oh Reineke, beautiful thou art, of a surety, in spite of thy great naughtiness. Art thou some fallen spirit, doomed to be hunted for thy sins in this life, and in some future life rewarded for thy swiftness, and grace, and cunning, by being made a very messenger of the immortals? Who knows? Not I.

I am rising fast to Pistol's vein. Shall I ejaculate? Shall I notify? Shall I waken the echoes? Shall I break the grand silence by that scream which the vulgar view-halloo call?

It is needless; for louder and louder every moment swells up a sound which makes my heart leap into my mouth, and my mare into the air.

Music? Well-beloved soul of Hullah, would that thou wert here this day, and not in St. Martin's Hall, to hear that chorus, as it pours round the fir-stems, rings against the roof above, shatters up into a hundred echoes, till the air is live with sound! You love madrigals, and whatever Weelkes, or Wilbye, or Orlando Gibbons sang of old. So do I. Theirs is music fit for men: worthy of the age of heroes, of Drake and Raleigh, Spenser and Shakspeare! but oh that you could hear this madrigal! If you must have 'four

parts,' then there they are. Deep-mouthed bass, rolling along the ground; rich joyful tenor; wild wistful alto; and leaping up here and there above the throng of sounds, delicate treble shrieks and trills of trembling joy. I know not whether you can fit it into your laws of music, any more than you can the song of that Ariel sprite who dwells in the Eolian harp, or the roar of the waves on the rock, or

> Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
> And murmur of innumerable bees.

But music it is. A madrigal? Rather a whole opera of Der Freischutz—dæmoniac element and all—to judge by those red lips, fierce eyes, wild, hungry voices; and such as should make Reinecke, had he strong æsthetic sympathies, well content to be hunted from his cradle to his grave, that such sweet sounds might by him enrich the air. Heroes of old were glad to die, if but some 'vates sacer' would sing their fame in worthy strains: and shalt not thou too be glad, Reinecke? Content thyself with thy fate. Music soothes care; let it soothe thine, as thou runnest for thy life; thou shalt have enough of it in the next hour. For as the Etruscans (says Athenæus) were so luxurious that they used to flog their slaves to the sound of the flute, so shall luxurious Chanter and Challenger, Sweetlips and Melody, eat thee to the sound of rich organ-pipes, that so thou mayest,

> Like that old fabled swan, in music die.

And now appear, dim at first and distant, but brightening and nearing fast, many a right good fellow and many a right good horse. I know three out of four of them, their private histories, the private histories of their horses: and could tell you many a good story of them: but shall not, being an English gentle-

man, and not an American *littérateur*. They are not very clever, or very learned, or very anything except gallant men: but they are good enough company for me, or any one; and each has his own *specialité*, for which I like him. That huntsman I have known for fifteen years, and sat many an hour beside his father's death-bed. I am godfather to that whip's child. I have seen the servants of the hunt, as I have the hounds, grow up round me for two generations, and I look on them as old friends—and like to look into their brave, honest, weather-beaten faces. That red coat there, I knew him when he was a schoolboy; and now he is a captain in the Guards, and won his Victoria Cross at Inkermann: that bright green coat is the best farmer, as well as the hardest rider, for many a mile round; one who plays, as he works, with all his might, and might have been a *beau sabreur* and colonel of dragoons. So might that black coat, who now brews good beer, and stands up for the poor at the Board of Guardians, and rides, like the green coat, as well as he works. The other black coat is a county banker: but he knows more of the fox than the fox knows of himself, and where the hounds are, there will he be this day. That red coat has hunted kangaroo in Australia; that one, as clever and good as he is brave and simple, stood by Napier's side at Meanee; that one won his Victoria at Delhi, was cut up at Lucknow, with more than twenty wounds; that one has—but what matter to you who each man is? Enough that each can tell me a good story, welcome me cheerfully, and give me out here, in the wild forest, the wholesome feeling of being at home among friends.

There is music, again, if you will listen, in the soft tread of these hundred horse-hoofs upon the spungy, vegetable soil. They are trotting now in 'common

time.' You may hear the whole Croats' March (the finest trotting march in the world) played by those iron heels; the time, as it does in the Croats' March, breaking now and then, plunging, jingling, struggling through heavy ground, bursting for a moment into a jubilant canter as it reaches a sound spot.

The hounds feather a moment round Malcpartus, puzzled by the windings of Reineeke's footsteps. I can hear the flap and snort of the dogs' nostrils as they canter round me; and I like it. It is exciting; but why—who can tell?

What beautiful creatures they are, too! Next to a Greek statue (I mean a real old Greek one; for I am a thoroughly anti-preraphaelite benighted pagan heathen in taste, and intend some day to get up a Cinque-Cento Club, for the total abolition of Gothic art)—next to a Greek statue, I say, I know few such combinations of grace and strength as in a fine foxhound. It is the beauty of the Theseus—light and yet massive; and light not in spite of its masses, but on account of the perfect disposition of them. I do not care for grace in man, woman, or animal, which is obtained (as in the old German painters) at the expense of honest flesh and blood. It may be all very pure, and unearthly, and saintly, and what not: but it is not healthy; and, therefore, it is not really High Art, let it call itself such as much as it likes. The highest art must be that in which the outward is the most perfect symbol of the inward; and, therefore, a healthy soul can be only exprest by a healthy body; and starved limbs and a hydrocephalous forehead must be either taken as incorrect symbols of spiritual excellence, or as (what they were really meant for) symbols of certain spiritual diseases which were in the Middle Age considered as ecclesiastical graces and virtues. Wherefore I like

pagan and naturalist art; consider Titian and Correggio as unappreciated geniuses, whose excellences the world will in some saner mood rediscover; hold in direct opposition to Rio, that Rafaelle improved steadily all his life through, and that his noblest works are not those somewhat simpering Madonnas and somewhat impish Bambinos (very lovely though they are), but those great, coarse, naturalist, Protestant cartoons, which (with Andrea Mantegna's Heathen Triumph) Cromwell saved for the British nation. I expect no one to agree with all this for the next quarter of a century: but after that I have hopes. The world will grow tired of pretending to admire Manichæan pictures in an age of natural science, and of building churches on the Popish model, to be used for Protestant worship; and art will let the dead bury their dead, and beginning again where Michael Angelo and Rafaelle left off, work forward into a nobler, truer, freer, and more divine school than the world has yet seen—at least, so I hope.

And all this has grown out of those foxhounds. Why not? Theirs is the sort of form which expresses to me what I want art to express—Nature not limited, but developed, by high civilization. The old savage ideal of beauty was the lion, type of mere massive force. That was succeeded by an over-civilized ideal, say the fawn, type of delicate grace. By cunning breeding and choosing, through long centuries, man has combined both, and has created the foxhound, lion, and fawn in one. Look at that old hound, who stands doubtful, looking up at his master for advice. Look at the severity, delicacy, lightness of every curve. His head is finer than a deer's; his hind legs tense as steel springs; his forelegs straight as arrows: and yet see the depth of chest, the sweep of loin, the breadth of paw, the mass of arm and thigh; and if you

have an eye for form, look at the absolute majesty of his attitude at this moment. Majesty is the only word for it. If he were six feet high, instead of twenty-three inches, with what animal on earth could you compare him? Is it not a joy to see such a thing alive? It is to me, at least. I should like to have one in my study all day long, as I would have a statue or a picture; and when Mr. Morrell gave (as they say) two hundred guineas for Hercules alone, I believe the dog was well worth the money, only to look at. But I am a minute philosopher.

I cap them on to the spot at which Reinecke disappeared. Old Virginal's stern flourishes; instantly her pace quickens. One whimper, and she is away full-mouthed through the wood, and the pack after her: but not I.

I am not going with them. My hunting days are over. Let it suffice that I have, in the days of my vanity, 'drank delight of battle with my peers far on the ringing plains' of many a county, grass and forest, down and vale. No, my gallant friends. You know that I could ride, if I chose; and I am vain enough to be glad that you know it. But vain are your coaxings, solicitations, wavings of honest right hands. 'Life,' as my friend Tom Brown says, 'is not all beer and skittles;' it is past two now, and I have four old women to read to at three, and an old man to bury at four, and I think on the whole, that you will respect me the more for going home and doing my duty. That I should like to see this fox fairly killed, or even fairly lost, I deny not. That I should like it as much as I can like any earthly and outward thing, I deny not. But sugar to one's bread and butter is not good; and if my winter-garden represent the bread and butter, then will fox-hunting

stand to it in the relation of superfluous and unwholesome sugar: so farewell; and long may your noble sport prosper—'the image of war with only half its danger,' to train you and your sons after, into gallant soldiers—full of

> The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength and skill.

So homeward I go through a labyrinth of fir-stems and, what is worse, fir-stumps, which need both my eyes and my horse's at every moment; and woe to the 'anchorite,' as old Bunbury names him, who carries his nose in the air, and his fore feet well under him. Woe to the self-willed or hard-hided horse who cannot take the slightest hint of the heel, and wince hind legs or fore out of the way of those jagged points which lie in wait for him. Woe, in fact, to all who are clumsy or cowardly, or in anywise not 'masters of the situation.'

Pleasant riding it is, though, if you dare look anywhere but over your horse's nose, under the dark roof, between the red fir-pillars, in that rich subdued light. Now I plunge into a gloomy dell, wherein is no tinkling rivulet, ever pure; but instead a bog, hewn out into a chess-board of squares, parted by deep narrow ditches some twenty feet apart. Blundering among the stems I go, fetlock-deep in peat, and jumping at every third stride one of the said uncanny gripes, half hidden in long hassock grass. Oh Aira cæspitosa, most stately and most variable of British grasses, why will you always grow where you are not wanted? Through you the mare all but left her hind legs in that last gripe. Through you a red coat ahead of me, avoiding one of your hassocks, jumped with his horse's nose full butt against a fir stem, and stopped,

> As one that is struck dead
> By lightning, ere he falls,

as I shall soon, in spite of the mare's cleverness. Would we were out of this!

Out of it I shall be soon. I see daylight ahead at last, bright between the dark stems. Up a steep slope and over a bank which is not very big, but being composed of loose gravel and peat mould, gives down with me, nearly sending me head over heels in the heather, and leaving me a sheer gap to scramble through, and out on the open moor.

Grand old moor! stretching your brown flats right away toward Windsor for many a mile.—Far to our right is the new Wellington College, looking stately enough here all alone in the wilderness, in spite of its two ugly towers and pinched waist.—When shall we have a decent public building? I can't stop to meditate on so very remote a chance. Close over me is the long fir-fringed ridge of Easthampstead, ending suddenly in Cæsar's camp; and hounds and huntsmen are already far ahead—are racing up the Roman road, which the clods of these parts, unable to give a better account of it, call the Devil's Highway.

Racing indeed; for as Reinecke gallops up the narrow heather-fringed pathway, he brushes off his scent upon the twigs at every stride, and the hounds race after him, showing no head indeed, and keeping, for convenience, in one long line upon the track; but going heads up, stems down, at a pace which no horse can follow.—I only hope they may not overrun the scent!

They have overrun it; halt, and put their heads down a moment. But with one swift cast in full gallop they have hit it off again, fifty yards away in the heather, long ere the horsemen are up to them; for those hounds can hunt a fox because they are not hunted themselves, and so have learnt to trust themselves, and act for themselves; as boys should learn at school, even at the

risk of a mistake or two. Now they are showing head indeed, down a half cleared valley, and over a few ineffectual turnips, withering in the peat, a patch of growing civilization in the heart of the wilderness; and then over the brook, while I turn slowly away, through a green wilderness of self-sown firs.

There they stand in thousands, the sturdy Scots, colonizing the desert in spite of frost, and gales, and barrenness; and clustering together, too, as Scotsmen always do abroad, little and big, every one under his neighbour's lee, according to the good old proverb of their native land, 'Caw me, and I'll caw thee.'

I respect them, those Scotch firs. I delight in their forms, from James the First's gnarled giants, up in Bramshill Park—the only place in England where a painter can learn what Scotch firs are—down to the little green pyramids which stand up out of the heather, triumphant over tyranny, and the strange woes of an untoward youth. Seven years on an average have most of them spent in ineffectual efforts to become a foot high. Nibbled off by hares, trodden down by cattle, cut down by turf parers, seeing hundreds of their brethren cut up and carried off in the turf-fuel, they are as gnarled and stubbed near the ground as an old thorn-bush in a pasture. But they have conquered at last, and are growing away, eighteen inches a-year, with fair green brushes silver-tipt, reclothing the wilderness with a vegetation which it has not seen for—how many thousand years?

No man can tell. For when last the Scotch fir was indigenous to England, and, mixed with the larch, stretched in one vast forest from Norfolk into Wales, England was not as it is now. Snowdon was, it may be, fifteen thousand feet in height, and from the edges of its glaciers the marmot and the musk ox, the elk and

the bear, wandered down into the Lowlands, and the hyena and the tiger dwelt in those caves where fox and badger only now abide. And how did the Scotch fir die out? Did the whole land sink slowly from its sub-Alpine elevation into a warmer climate below? Or was it never raised at all? Did some change of the Atlantic sea-floor turn for the first time the warm Gulf Stream to these shores; and with its soft sea-breezes melt away the 'Age of Ice,' till glaciers and pines, marmots and musk oxen, perspired to death, and vanished for an Œon? Who knows? Not I. But of the fact there can be no doubt. Whether, as we hold traditionally here, the Scotch fir was re-introduced by James the First when he built Bramshill for Raleigh's hapless pet, Henry the Prince, or whatever may have been the date of their re-introduction, here they are, and no one can turn them out. In countless thousands the winged seeds float down the south-west gales from the older trees; and every seed which falls takes root in ground which, however unable to bear broad-leaved trees, is ready by long rest for the seeds of the needle-leaved ones. Thousands perish yearly; but the eastward march of the whole, up hill and down dale, is sure and steady as that of Lynceus' Goths in Goethe's Helena:—

> Ein lang und breites Volksgewicht,
> Der erste wusste vom letzen nicht.
>
> Der erste fiel, der zweite stand,
> Des dritten Lanze war zur Hand,
> Ein jeder hundertfach gestärkt;
> Erschlagene Tausend unbemerkt.

Till, as you stand upon some eminence, you see, stretching to the eastward of each tract of older trees, a long cloud of younger ones, like a green comet's tail—I wish their substance was as yielding this day. Truly beautiful—grand indeed to me it is—to see

young live Nature thus carrying on a great savage process in the heart of this old and seemingly all-artificial English land; and reproducing here, as surely as in the Australian bush, a native forest, careless of mankind. Still, I wish it were easier to ride through. Stiff are those Scotchmen, and close and stout they stand by each other, and claw at you as you twist through them, the biggest aiming at your head, or even worse, at your knees; while the middle-sized slip their brushes between your thigh and the saddle, and the little babies tickle your horse's stomach, or twine about his fore-feet. Whish—whish; I am enveloped in what seems an atmosphere of scrubbing-brushes. Fain would I shut my eyes: but dare not, or I shall ride against a tree. Whish—whish; alas for the horse which cannot wind and turn like a hare! Plunge—stagger. What is this? A broad line of ruts; perhaps some Celtic trackway, two thousand years old, now matted over with firs; dangerous enough out on the open moor, when only masked by a line of higher and darker heath: but doubly dangerous now when masked by dark undergrowth. You must find your own way here, mare. I will positively have nothing to do with it. I disclaim all responsibility. There are the reins on your neck; do what you will, only do something—and if you can, get forward, and not back.

There is daylight at last, and fresh air. I trot contemptuously through the advanced skirmishers of the Scotch invading army; and watch my friends some mile and a half off, who have threaded a practicable trackway through a long dreary yellow bog, too wet for firs to root in, and away in 'a streamer.' Now a streamer is produced in this wise. There is but one possible gap in a bank, one possible ford in a brook; one possible path in a cover; and as each man has to

wait till the man before him gets through, and then gallops on, each man loses twenty yards or more on the man before him: wherefore, by all laws of known arithmetic, if ten men tail through a gap, then will the last of the ten find himself two hundred yards behind the foremost, which process several times repeated, produces the phenomenon called a streamer, viz., twenty men galloping absurdly as hard as they can, in a line half a mile long, and in humours which are celestial in the few foremost, contented in the central, and gradually becoming darker in the hindmost; till in the last man they assume a hue altogether Tartarean. Farewell, brave gentlemen! I watch, half sadly, half self-contented, the red coats scattered like sparks of fire over hill and dale, and turn slowly homeward, to visit my old woman.

I pass through a gateway, out upon a village green, planted with rows of oaks, surrounded by trim sunny cottages, a pleasant oasis in the middle of the wilderness. Across the village cricket-ground (we are great cricketers in these parts, and long may the good old game live among us), and then up another hollow lane, which leads between damp shaughs and copses toward the further moor.

Curious things to a minute philosopher are these same hollow lanes. They set him on archæological questions, more than he can solve; and I meditate as I go, how many centuries it took to saw through the warm sandbanks this dyke ten feet deep, up which he trots, with the oak boughs meeting over his head. Was it ever worth men's while to dig out the soil? Surely not. The old method must have been, to remove the softer upper spit, till they got to tolerably hard ground; and then, Macadam's metal being as yet unknown, the rains and the wheels of generations sawed gradually

deeper and deeper, till this road-ditch was formed. But it must have taken centuries to do it. Many of these hollow lanes, especially those on flat ground, must be as old or older than the Conquest. In Devonshire, I am sure that they are. But there many of them, one suspects, were made, not of malice, but of cowardice prepense. Your indigenous Celt was, one fears, a sneaking animal, and liked to keep when he could under cover of banks and hill-sides; while your bold Roman made his raised roads straight over hill and dale, 'ridge-ways' from which, as from an eagle's eyrie, he could survey the conquered lowlands far and wide. It marks strongly the difference between the two races, that difference between the Roman paved road, with its established common way for all passengers, its regular stations and milestones, and the Celtic trackway, winding irresolutely along in innumerable ruts, parting to meet again, as if each savage (for they were nothing better) had taken his own fresh path when he found the next line of ruts too heavy for his cattle. Around the spurs of Dartmoor I have seen many ancient roads, some of them long disused, which could have been hollowed out for no other purpose but that of concealment.

So I go slowly up the hill, till the valley lies beneath me like a long green garden between its two banks of brown moor, and through a cheerful little green, with red brick cottages scattered all round, each with its large neat garden, and beehives, and pigs and geese, and turf-stack, and clipt yews and hollies before the door, and rosy dark-eyed children, and all the simple healthy comforts of a wild 'heth-cropper's' home. When he can, the good man of the house works at farm labour, or cuts his own turf; and when work is scarce, he cuts copses and makes

heath-brooms, and does a little poaching. True, he seldom goes to church, save to be christened, married, or buried; but he equally seldom gets drunk. For church and public stand together two miles off; so that social wants sometimes bring their own compensations with them, and there are two sides to every question.

Hark! A faint, dreary hollo off the moor above. And then another, and another. My friends may trust it; for the clod of these parts delights in the chase like any bare-legged Paddy, and casts away flail and fork wildly, to run, shout, assist, and interfere in all possible ways, out of pure love. The descendant of many generations of broom-squires and deer-stealers, the instinct of sport is strong within him still, though no more of the king's deer are to be shot in the winter turnip-fields, or worse, caught by an apple-baited hook hung from an orchard bough. He now limits his aspirations to hares and pheasants, and too probably once in his life, 'hits the keeper into the river,' and reconsiders himself for a while after over a crank in Winchester gaol. Well, he has his faults; and I have mine. But he is a thorough good fellow nevertheless; quite as good as I: civil, contented, industrious, and often very handsome; and a far shrewder fellow too—owing to his dash of wild forest blood—gipsy, highwayman, and what not—than his bullet-headed, and flaxen-polled cousin, the pure South-Saxon of the Chalk-downs. Dark-haired he is, ruddy, and tall of bone; swaggering in his youth; but when he grows old, a thorough gentleman, reserved, stately, and courteous as a prince. Sixteen years have I lived with him hail fellow well met, and never yet had a rude word or action from him.

With him I have cast in my lot, to live and die, and

be buried by his side; and to him I go home contented, to look after his petty interests, cares, sorrows—Petty, truly—seeing that they include the whole primal mysteries of life—Food, raiment, and work to earn them withal; love and marriage, birth and death, right doing and wrong doing, 'sekicksal und eigene schuld;' and all those commonplaces of humanity which in the eyes of a minute philosopher are most divine, because they are most commonplace—Catholic as the sunshine and the rain which come down from the Heavenly Father, alike upon the evil and the good. As for doing fine things, my friend, with you, I have learnt to believe that I am not set to do fine things, simply because I am not able to do them; and as for seeing fine things, with you, I have learnt to see the sight—as well as to try to do the duty—which lies nearest me; and to comfort myself with the fancy that if I make good use of my eyes and brain in this life, I shall see—if it be of any use to me—all the fine things, or perhaps finer still, in the life to come. But if not—what matter? In any life, in any state, however simple or humble, there will be always sufficient to occupy a Minute Philosopher; and if a man be busy, and busy about his duty, what more does he require, for time or for eternity?

CHALK-STREAM STUDIES.*

FISHING is generally associated in men's minds with wild mountain scenery; if not with the alps and cataracts of Norway, still with the moors and lochs of Scotland, or at least with the rocky rivers, the wooded crags, the crumbling abbeys of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Hereford, or the Lowlands. And it cannot be denied that much of the charm which angling exercises over cultivated minds, is due to the beauty and novelty of the landscapes which surround him; to the sense of freedom, the exhilarating upland air. Who would prefer the certainty of taking trout out of some sluggish preserve, to the chance of a brace out of Edno or Llyn Dulyn? The pleasure lies not in the prize itself, but in the pains which it has cost; in the upward climbs through the dark plantations, beside the rock-walled stream: the tramp over the upland pastures, one gay flower-bed of blue and purple butter-wort: the steady breathless climb up the crags, which looked but one mile from you when you started, so clear against the sky stood out every knoll and slab; the first stars of the white saxifrage, golden-eyed, blood-bedropt, as if a fairy had pricked her finger in the cup, which shine upon some green cushion of wet moss, in a dripping crack of the cliff; the first grey tufts of the Alpine club-moss, the first shrub of crow-berry, or sea-green rose-root, with

* Fraser's Magazine, September, 1858.

its strange fleshy stems and leaves, which mark the two-thousand-feet-line, and the beginning of the Alpine world; the scramble over the arid waves of the porphyry sea aloft, as you beat round and round like a weary pointer dog in search of the hidden lake; the last despairing crawl to the summit of the Syenite pyramid on Moel Meirch; the hasty gaze around, far away into the green vale of Ffestiniog, and over wooded flats, and long silver river-reaches, and yellow sands, and blue sea flecked with flying clouds, and isles and capes, and wildernesses of mountain peaks, east, west, south, and north: one glance at the purple gulf out of which Snowdon rises, thence only seen in full majesty from base to peak: and then the joyful run, springing over bank and boulder, to the fathomless tarn beneath your feet: the pull at the whisky-flask, as you toss yourself, bathed in perspiration, on the turf; the almost awed pause, as you recollect that you are alone on the mountain-tops, by the side of the desolate volcano crater, out of all hope of speech or help of man; and, if you break your leg among those rocks, may lie there till the ravens pick your bones; the anxious glance round the lake to see if the fish are moving; the still more anxious glance through your book to guess what they will choose to take; what extravagant bundle of red, blue, and yellow feathers, like no insect save perhaps some jewelled monster from Amboyna or New Guinea —may tempt those sulkiest and most capricious of trout to cease for once their life-long business of picking leeches from among those Syenite cubes which will twist your ankles and break your shins for the next three hours. What matter (to a minute philosopher, at least) if, after two hours of such enjoyment as that, he goes down again into the world of man with empty creel, or with a dozen pounders and two-pounders, shorter, gamer,

and redder-fleshed than ever came out of Thames or Kennet? What matter? If he has not caught them, he might have caught them; he has been catching them in imagination all the way up; and if he be a minute philosopher he holds that there is no falser proverb than that devil's beatitude,—'Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed.'

Say, rather, Blessed is he who expecteth everything, for he enjoys everything once at least; and if it falls out true, twice also.

Yes. Pleasant enough is mountain fishing. But there is one objection against it, that it is hard work to get to it; and that the angler, often enough half-tired before he arrives at his stream or lake, has left for his day's work only the lees of his nervous energy.

Another objection, more important perhaps to a minute philosopher than to the multitude, is, that there is in mountain-fishing an element of excitement—an element which is wholesome enough at times for every one; most wholesome at all times for the man pent up in London air and London work; but which takes away from the angler's most delicate enjoyment, that dreamy contemplative repose, broken by just enough amusement to keep his body active, while his mind is quietly taking in every sight and sound of nature. Let the Londoner have his six weeks every year among crag and heather, and return with lungs expanded and muscles braced to his nine months' prison. The countryman, who needs no such change of air and scene, will prefer more home-like, though more homely pleasures. Dearer to him than wild cataracts or Alpine glens, are the still, hidden streams which Bewick has immortalized in his vignettes, and Creswick in his pictures; the long glassy shallow, paved with yellow gravel, where he wades up between low walls of fern-fringed rock, beneath nut, and oak,

and alder, to the low bar over which the stream comes swirling and dimpling, as the water-ouzel flits piping before him, and the murmur of the ringdove comes soft and sleepy through the wood. There, as he wades, he sees a hundred sights and hears a hundred tones, which are hidden from the traveller on the dusty highway above. The traveller fancies that he has seen the country. So he has; the outside of it, at least; but the angler only sees the inside. The angler only is brought close face to face with the flower, and bird, and insect life of the rich river banks, the only part of the landscape where the hand of man has never interfered, and the only part in general which never feels the drought of summer, 'the trees planted by the water-side, whose leaf shall not wither.'

Pleasant are those hidden waterways; but yet are they the more pleasant because the hand of man has not interfered with them?

It is a question, and one which the older one grows the less one is inclined to answer in the affirmative. The older one grows, the more there grows on one the sense of waste and incompleteness in all scenery where man has not fulfilled the commission of Eden, 'to dress it and to keep it;' and with that, a sense of loneliness which makes one long for home, and cultivation, and the speech of fellow men.

Surely the influence of mountain scenery is exaggerated now-a-days. In spite of the reverend name of Wordsworth (whose poetry, be it remembered, wants exactly that element of hardihood and manliness which is supposed to be the birthright of mountaineers), one cannot help, as a lowlander, hoping that there is a little truth in the threnodes of a certain peevish friend who literally hates a mountain, and justifies his hatred in this fashion:—

'I do hate mountains. I would not live among them for ten thousand a-year. If they look like paradise for three months in the summer, they are a veritable inferno for the other nine; and I should like to condemn my mountain-worshipping friends to pass a whole year under the shadow of Snowdon, with that great black head of his shutting out the sunlight, staring down into their garden, overlooking all they do in the most impertinent way, sneezing and spitting at them with rain, hail, snow, and bitter freezing blasts, even in the hottest sunshine. A mountain? He is a great stupid giant, with a perpetual cold in his head, whose highest ambition is to give you one also. As for his beauty, no natural object has so little of its own; he owes it to the earthquakes that reared him up, to the rains and storms which have furrowed him, to every gleam and cloud which pass over him. In himself he is a mere helpless stone-heap. Our old Scandinavian forefathers were right when they held the mountain Yotuns to be helpless pudding-headed giants, the sport of gods and men: and their Cambridge descendant, in spite of all his second-hand sentiment, holds the same opinion at his heart; for his first instinct, jolly honest fellow that he is, on seeing a snow alp, is to scramble up it and smoke his cigar upon the top. And this great stupid braggart, pretending to be a personage and an entity, which, like Pope's monument on Fish-street hill,

Like a tall bully, lifts the head and lies,

I am called upon now-a-days to worship, as my better, my teacher. Shall I, the son of Odin and Thor, worship Hrymir the frost giant, and his cows the waterfalls? Shall I bow down to the stock of a stone? My better? I have done an honest thing or two in my life, but I never saw a mountain do one yet. As

for his superiority to me, in what does it consist? His strength? If he be stronger than I, let him cut stones out of my ribs, as I can out of his. His size? Am I to respect a mountain the more for being 10,000 feet high? As well ask me to respect Daniel Lambert for weighing five-and-twenty stone. His cunning construction? There is not a child which plays at his foot, not an insect which basks on his crags, which is not more fearfully and wonderfully made; while as for his grandeur of form, any college youth who scrambles up him, peel him out of his shooting jacket and trousers, is a hundred times more beautiful, and more grand too, by all laws of art. But so it is. In our prurient prudery, we have got to despise the human, and therefore the truly divine, element in art, and look for inspiration, not to living men and women, but to leaves and straws, stocks and stones. It is an idolatry baser than that of the old Canaanites; for they had the courage to go up to the mountain tops, and thence worship the host of heaven: but we are to stay at the bottom, and worship the mountains themselves. Byron began the folly with his misanthropic 'Childe Harold,' and Mr. Ruskin is perfecting it with his 'Stones of Venice.' Sermons in stones? I don't believe in them. I have seen a better sermon in an old peasant woman's face than in all the Alps and Apennines of Europe. Did you ever see any one who was the better for mountains? Have the Alps made * * * a whit honester, or * * * a whit more good-natured, or Lady * * * a whit cleverer? Do they alter one hair's breadth for the better the characters of the ten thousand male and female noodles who travel forth to stare at them every year? Do mountains make them lofty-minded and generous-hearted? No. Cælum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt. Don't talk to me of the moral

and physical superiority of mountain races, for I tell you it is a dream. Civilization, art, poetry, belong to the lowlands. Are the English mountaineers, pray, or the French, or the Germans? Were the Egyptians mountaineers, or the Romans, or the Assyrians, as soon as they became a people? The Greeks lived among mountains, but they took care to inhabit the plains; and it was the sea and not the hills which made them the people which they are. Does Scotland owe her life to the highlander, or to the lowlander? If you want an experimentum crucis, there is one. As for poetry, will you mention to me one mountain race which has written great poetry? You will quote the Hebrews. I answer that the life of Palestine always kept to the comparatively low lands to the west of Jordan, while the barbarous mountaineers of the eastern range never did anything,—had but one Elijah to show among them. Shakspeare never saw a hill higher than Malvern beacon; and yet I suppose you will call him a poet? As for mountain morality—look at the Swiss. If you wish to know the morals of the men, ask any English traveller who has just paid his bill; if those of the women, ask any German student returned from his vacation ramble. Mountaineers look well enough at a distance; seen close at hand you find their chief distinctions to be starvation and ignorance, fleas and goitre, with an utter unconsciousness—unless travellers put it into their heads—of the 'soul-elevating glories' by which they have been surrounded all their lives.'

He was gently reminded of the existence of the Tyrolese.

'You may just as wisely remind me of the Circassians. What can prove my theory more completely than the fact that in them you have the two finest races of the world, utterly unable to do anything for hu-

manity, utterly unable to develop themselves, because, to their eternal misfortune, they have got caged among those abominable stoneheaps, and have not yet been able to escape?'

It was suggested that if mountain races were generally inferior ones, it was because they were the remnants of conquered tribes driven up into the highlands by invaders.

'And what does that prove but that the stronger and cunninger races instinctively seize the lowlands, because they half know (and Providence knows altogether) that there alone they can become nations, and fulfil the primæval mission—to replenish the earth and subdue it? No, no, my good sir. Mountains are very well when they are doing their only duty—that of making rain and soil for the lowlands: but as for this new-fangled admiration of them, it is a proof that our senses are dulled by luxury and books, and that we require to excite our palled organ of marvellousness by signs and wonders, æsthetic brandy and cayenne. No. I have remarked often that the most unimaginative people, who can see no beauty in a cultivated English field or in the features of a new-born babe, are the loudest ravers about glorious sunsets and Alpine panoramas; just as the man with no music in his soul, to whom a fugue of Sebastian Bach, or one of Mendelssohn's Songs without Words, means nothing, and is nothing, thinks a monster concert of drums and trumpets uncommonly fine.'

This is certainly a sufficiently one-sided diatribe. Still it is one-sided: and we have heard so much of the other side of late, that it may be worth while to give this side also a fair and patient hearing.

At least he who writes wishes that it may have a fair hearing. He has a sort of sympathy with Lord Macaulay's traveller of a hundred and fifty years since,

who amid the 'horrible desolation' of the Scotch highlands, sighs for 'the true mountain scenery of Richmond-hill.' The most beautiful landscape he has ever seen, or cares to see, is the vale of Thames from Taplow or from Cliefden, looking down towards Windsor, and up toward Reading; to him Bramshill, looking out far and wide over the rich lowland from its eyrie of dark pines, or Littlecote nestling between deer-spotted upland and rich water-meadow, is a finer sight than any robber castle of the Rhine. He would not complain, of course, were either of the views backed, like those glorious ones of Turin or Veniec, by the white saw-edge of the distant Alps: but chiefly because the perpetual sight of that Alp-wall would increase the sense of home, of guarded security, which not the mountain, but the sea, or the very thought of the sea, gives to all true Englishmen.

Let others therefore (to come back to angling) tell of moor and loch. But let it be always remembered that the men who have told of them best have not been mountaineers, but lowlanders who carried up to the mountain the taste and knowledge which they had gained below. Let them remember that the great Sutherlandshire sportsman and sporting writer, the late Mr. St. John, was once a fine gentleman about town; that Christopher North was an Edinburgh Professor, a man of city learning and city cultivation; and, as one more plea for our cockney chalk streams of the south, that Mr. Scrope (who passed many pleasant years respected and beloved by Kennet side, with Purdy at his heels) enjoyed, they say, the killing of a Littlecote trout as heartily as he did that of a Tweed salmon.

Come, then, you who want pleasant fishing days without the waste of time and trouble and expense involved in two hundred miles of railway journey,

and perhaps fifty more of highland road, and try what you can see and do among the fish not sixty miles from town. Come to pleasant country inns, where you can always get a good dinner; or, better still, to pleasant country houses, where you can always get good society; to rivers which will always fish, brimfull in the longest droughts of summer, instead of being, as those mountain ones are, very like a turnpike-road for three weeks, and then like bottled porter for three days; to streams on which you have strong south-west breezes for a week together on a clear fishing water, instead of having, as on those mountain ones, foul rain spate as long as the wind is south-west, and clearing water when the wind chops up to the north, and the chill blast of 'Clarus Aquilo' sends all the fish shivering to the bottom; streams, in a word, where you may kill fish (and large ones) four days out of five from April to October, instead of having, as you will most probably in the mountain, just one day's sport in the whole of your month's holiday. Deluded friend, who suffered in Scotland last year a month of Tantalus his torments, furnished by art and nature with rods, flies, whisky, scenery, keepers, salmon innumerable, and all that man can want, except water to fish in; and who returned, having hooked accidentally by the tail one salmon—which broke all and went to sea—why did you not stay at home and take your two-pounders and three-pounders out of the quiet chalk brook which never sank an inch through all that drought, so deep in the caverns of the hills are hidden its mysterious wells? Truly, wise men bide at home, with George Riddler, while 'a fool's eyes are in the ends of the earth.'

Repent, then; and come with me, at least in fancy, at six o'clock upon some breezy morning in June, not by roaring railway nor by smoking steamer, but in the

cosy four-wheel, along brown heather moors, down into green clay woodlands, over white chalk downs, past Roman camps and scattered blocks of Sarsden stone, till we descend into the long green vale where, among groves of poplar and abele, winds silver Whit. Come and breakfast at the neat white inn, of yore a posting house of fame. The stables are now turned into cottages; and instead of a dozen spruce ostlers and helpers, the last of the postboys totters sadly about the yard and looks up eagerly at the rare sight of a horse to feed. But the house keeps up enough of its ancient virtue to give us a breakfast worthy of Pantagruel's self; and after it, while we are looking out our flies, you can go and chat with the old postboy, and hear his tales, told with a sort of chivalrous pride, of the noble lords and fair ladies before whom he has ridden in the good old times gone by—even, so he darkly hints, before 'His Royal Highness the Prince' himself. Poor old fellow, he recollects not, and he need not recollect, that these great posting houses were centres of corruption, from whence the newest vices of the metropolis were poured into the too-willing ears of village lads and lasses; and that not even the New Poor-Law itself has done more for the morality of the South of England than the substitution of the rail for coaches.

Now we will walk down through the meadows some half mile,

> While all the land in flowery squares,
> Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind
> Smells of the coming summer,

to a scene which, as we may find its antitype anywhere for miles round, we may boldly invent for ourselves.

A red brick mill (not new red brick, of course) shall

hum for ever below giant poplar-spires, which bend and shiver in the steady breeze. On its lawn laburnums shall feather down like dropping wells of gold, and from under them the stream shall hurry leaping and laughing into the light, and spread at our feet into a broad bright shallow, in which the kine are standing knee-deep already, a hint, alas! that the day means heat. And there, to the initiated eye, is another and a darker hint of glaring skies, perspiring limbs, and empty creels. Small fish are dimpling in the central eddies: but here, in six inches of water, on the very edge of the ford road, great tails and back-fins are showing above the surface, and swirling suddenly among the tufts of grass, sure sign that the large fish are picking up a minnow-breakfast at the same time that they warm their backs, and do not mean to look at a fly for many an hour to come.

Yet courage; for on the rail of yonder wooden bridge sits, chatting with a sun-browned nymph, her bonnet pushed over her face, her hayrake in her hand, a river-god in coat of velveteen, elbow on knee and pipe in mouth, and rising when he sees us, lifts his wideawake, and halloas back a roar of comfort to our mystic adjuration,—

'Keeper! Is the fly up?'

'Mortial strong last night, gentlemen.'

Wherewith he shall lounge up to us, landing-net in hand, and we will wander up stream and away.

We will wander—for though the sun be bright, here are good fish to be picked out of sharps and stop-holes—into the water-tables, ridged up centuries since into furrows forty feet broad and five feet high, over which the crystal water sparkles among the roots of the rich grass, and hurries down innumerable drains to find its parent stream between tufts of great blue geranium,

and spires of purple loosestrife, and the delicate white and pink comfrey-bells, and the avens—fairest and most modest of all the water-side nymphs, who hangs her head all day long in pretty shame, with a soft blush upon her tawny cheek. But at the mouth of each of those drains, if we can get our flies in, and keep ourselves unseen, we will have one cast at least. For at each of them, in some sharp-rippling spot, lies a great trout or two, waiting for beetle, caterpillar, and whatsoever else may be washed from among the long grass above. There, and from brimming feeders, which slip along, weed-choked, under white hawthorn hedges, and beneath the great roots of oak and elm, shall we pick out full many a goodly trout. There, in yon stop-hole underneath that tree, not ten feet broad or twenty long, where just enough water trickles through the hatches to make a ripple, are a brace of noble fish, no doubt; and one of them you may be sure of, if you will go the proper way to work, and fish scientifically with the brace of flies I have put on for you—a governor and a black alder. In the first place, you must throw up into the little pool, not down. If you throw down, they will see you in an instant; and besides, you will never get your fly close under the shade of the brickwork, where alone you have a chance. What use throwing into the still shallow tail, shining like oil in the full glare of the sun?

'But I cannot get below the pool without——'

Without crawling through that stiff stubbed hedge, well set with trees, and leaping that ten-foot feeder afterwards. Very well. It is this sort of thing which makes the stay-at-home cultivated chalk-fishing as much harder work than mountain angling, as a gallop over a stiffly enclosed country is harder than one over an open moor. You can do it or not, as you like; but

if you wish to catch large trout on a bright day, I should advise you to employ the only method yet discovered.

There—you are through; and the keeper shall hand you your rod. You have torn your trousers, and got a couple of thorns in your shins. The one can be mended, the other pulled out. Now, jump the feeder. There is no run to it, so—you have jumped in. Never mind: but keep the point of your rod up. You are at least saved the lingering torture of getting wet inch by inch; and as for cold water hurting any one—Credat Judæus.

Now make a circuit through the meadow forty yards away. Stoop down when you are on the ridge of each table. A trout may be basking at the lower end of the pool, who will see you, rush up, and tell all his neighbours. Take off that absurd black chimney-pot, which you are wearing, I suppose, for the same reason as Homer's heroes wore their koruthous and phalerous, to make yourself look taller and more terrible to your foes. Crawl up on three legs; and when you are in position, kneel down. So.

Shorten your line all you can—you cannot fish with too short a line up-stream; and throw, not into the oil-basin near you, but right up into the darkest corner. Make your fly strike the brickwork and drop in.—So? No rise? Then don't work or draw it, or your deceit is discovered instantly. Lift it out, and repeat the throw.

What? You have hooked your fly in the hatches? Very good. Pull at it till the casting-line breaks; put on a fresh one, and to work again. There! you have him. Don't rise! fight him kneeling; hold him hard, and give him no line, but shorten up anyhow. Tear and haul him down to you before he can make to his home,

while the keeper runs round with the net. . . . . There, he is on shore. Two pounds, good weight. Creep back more cautiously than ever, and try again. . . . . There. A second fish, over a pound weight. Now we will go and recover the flies off the hatches; and you will agree that there is more cunning, more science, and therefore more pleasant excitement, in 'foxing' a great fish out of a stop-hole, than in whipping far and wide over an open stream, where a half-pounder is a wonder and a triumph. As for physical exertion, you will be able to compute for yourself how much your back, knees, and fore-arm will ache by nine o'clock to-night, after some ten hours of this scrambling, splashing, leaping, and kneeling upon a hot June day. This item in the day's work will of course be put to the side of loss or of gain, according to your temperament: but it will cure you of an inclination to laugh at us Wessex chalk-fishers as Cockneys.

So we will wander up the streams, taking a fish here and a fish there, till——Really it is very hot. We have the whole day before us; the fly will not be up till five o'clock at least; and then the real fishing will begin. Why tire ourselves beforehand? The squire will send us luncheon in the afternoon, and after that expect us to fish as long as we can see, and come up to the hall to sleep, regardless of the ceremony of dressing. For is not the green drake on? And while he reigns, all hours, meals, decencies, and respectabilities must yield to his caprice. See, here he sits, or rather tens of thousands of him, one on each stalk of grass—green drake, yellow drake, brown drake, white drake, each with his gauzy wings folded over his back, waiting for some unknown change of temperature, or something else, in the afternoon, to wake him from his sleep, and send him fluttering over the stream; while overhead

the black drake, who has changed his skin and reproduced his species, dances in the sunshine, empty, hard, and happy, like Festus Bailey's Great Black Crow (the only humorous thing he ever wrote), who all his life sings 'Ho, ho, ho.'

For no one will eat him, he well doth know.

However, as we have insides, and he has actually none, and what is more strange, not even a mouth wherewith to fill the said insides, we had better copy his brothers and sisters below whose insides are still left, and settle with them upon the grass awhile beneath yon goodly elm.

Comfort yourself with a glass of sherry and a biscuit, and give the keeper one, and likewise a cigar. He will value it at five times its worth, not merely for the pleasure of it, but because it raises him in the social scale. 'Any cad,' so he holds, 'smokes pipes; but a good cigar is the note of the quality,' and of them who 'keep company with the quality,' as keepers do. He puts it in his hat-crown, to smoke this evening in presence of his compeers at the public-house, retires modestly ten yards, lies down on his back in a dry feeder, under the shade of the long grass, and instantly falls fast asleep. Poor fellow! he was up all last night in the covers, and will be again to-night. Let him sleep while he may, and we will chat over chalk-fishing.

The first thing, probably, on which you will be inclined to ask questions, is the size of the fish in these streams. We have killed this morning four fish averaging a pound weight each. All below that weight we throw in, as is our rule here; but you may have remarked that none of them exceeded half a pound; that they were almost all about herring size. The smaller ones I believe to be year-old fish, hatched last spring

twelvemonth; the pound fish two-year olds. At what rate these last would have increased depends very much, I suspect, on their chance of food. The limit of life and growth in cold-blooded animals seems to depend very much on their amount of food. The boa, alligator, shark, pike, and I suppose the trout also, will live to a great age, and attain an enormous size, give them but range enough; and the only cause why there are trout of ten pounds and more in the Thames lashers, while one of four pounds is rare here, is simply that the Thames fish has more to eat. Here, were the fish not sufficiently thinned out every year by anglers, they would soon become large-headed, brown, and flabby, and cease to grow. Many a good stream has been spoilt in this way, when a squire has unwisely preferred quantity to quality of fish.

And if it be not the quantity of feed, I know no clear reason why chalk and limestone trout should be so much larger and better flavoured than any others. The cause is not the greater swiftness of the streams; for (paradoxical as it may seem to many), a trout likes swift water no more than a pike does, except when spawning or cleaning afterwards. At those times his blood seems to require a very rapid oxygenation, and he goes to the 'sharps' to obtain it: but when he is feeding and fattening, the water cannot be too still for him. Streams which are rapid throughout never produce large fish; and a hand-long trout transferred from his native torrent to a still pond, will increase in size at a ten times faster rate. In chalk streams the largest fish are found oftener in the mill-heads than in the mill-tails. It is a mistake, though a common one, to fancy that the giant trout of the Thames lashers lie in swift water. On the contrary, they lie in the very stillest spot of the whole pool, which is just under the hatches.

There the rush of the water shoots over their heads, and they look up through it for every eatable which may be swept down. At night they run down to the fan of the pool, to hunt minnow round the shallows; but their home by day is the still deep; and their preference of the lasher pool to the quiet water above is due merely to the greater abundance of food. Chalk trout, then, are large not merely because the water is swift.

Whether trout have not a specific fondness for lime; whether water of some dozen degrees of hardness is not necessary for their development? are questions which may be fairly asked. Yet is not the true reason this; that the soil on the banks of a chalk or limestone stream is almost always rich—red loam, carrying an abundant vegetation, and therefore an abundant crop of animal life, both in and out of the water? The countless insects which haunt a rich hay meadow, all know who have eyes to see; and if they will look into the stream they will find that the water-world is even richer than the air-world.

Every still spot in a chalk stream becomes so choked with weed as to require mowing at least thrice a year, to supply the mills with water. Grass, milfoil, water crowfoot, hornwort, starwort, horsetail, and a dozen other delicate plants, form one tangled forest, denser than those of the Amazon, and more densely peopled likewise.

To this list will soon be added our Transatlantic curse, Babingtonia diabolica, alias Anacharis alsinastrum. It has already ascended the Thames as high as Reading; and a few years more, owing to the present aqua-vivarium mania, will see it filling every mill-head in England, to the torment of all millers. Young ladies are assured that the only plant for their vivariums

is a sprig of anacharis, for which they pay sixpence—the market value being that of a wasp, flea, or other scourge of the human race; and when the vivarium fails, its contents, Anacharis and all, are tost into the nearest ditch; for which the said young lady ought to be fined five pounds; and would be, if Governments governed. What an 'if!'

But come; for the sun burns bright, and fishing is impossible: lie down upon the bank above this stop. There is a campshutting (a boarding in English) on which you can put your elbows. Lie down on your face, and look down through two or three feet of water clear as air, into the water forest where the great trout feed.

Here; look into this opening in the milfoil and crowfoot bed. Do you see a grey film around that sprig? Examine it through the pocket lens. It is a forest of glass bells, on branching stalks. They are Vortiecllæ; and every one of those bells, by the ciliary current on its rim, is seavenging the water—till a tadpole comes by and scavenges it. How many millions of living creatures are there on that one sprig? Look here!—a brown polype, with long waving arms—a gigantic monster, actually a full half-inch long. He is Hydra fusca, most famous, and earliest described (I think by Trembley). Ere we go home I may show you perhaps Hydra viridis, with long pea-green arms, and rosea, most beautiful in form and colour of all the strange family. You see that lump, just where his stalk joins his bell-head? That is a budding baby. Ignorant of the joys and cares of wedlock, he increases by gemmation. See! here is another, with a full-sized young one growing on his back. You may tear it off if you will—he cares not. You may cut him into a dozen pieces, they say, and each one will grow, as a

potato does. I suppose, however, that he also sends out of his mouth little free ova—medusoids—call them what you will, swimming by ciliæ, which afterwards, unless the water beetles stop them on the way, will settle down as stalked polypes, and in their turn practise some mystery of Owenian parthenogenesis, or Steenstruppian alternation of generations, in which all traditional distinctions of plant and animal, male and female, are laughed to scorn by the magnificent fecundity of the Divine imaginations.

That dusty cloud which shakes off in the water as you move the weed, under the microscope would be one mass of exquisite forms—Desmidiæ and Diatomaceæ, and what not? Instead of running over long names, take home a little in a bottle, put it under your microscope, and if you think good verify the species from Hassall, Ehrenberg, or other wise book; but without doing that, one glance through the lens will show you why the chalk trout grow fat.

Do they, then, eat these infusoria?

That is not clear. But minnows and small fry eat them by millions; and so do tadpoles, and perhaps caddis baits and water crickets.

What are they?

Look on the soft muddy bottom. You see numberless bits of stick. Watch awhile, and those sticks are alive, crawling and tumbling over each other. The weed, too, is full of smaller ones. Those live sticks are the larva-cases of the Caperers—Phryganeæ—of which one family nearly two hundred species have been already found in great Britain. Fish up one, and you find, amid sticks and pebbles, a comfortable silk case, tenanted by a goodly grub. Six legs he has, like all insects, and tufts of white horns on each ring of his abdomen, which are his gills. A goodly pair of jaws

he has too, and does good service with them: for he is the great water scavenger. Decaying vegetable matter is his food, and with those jaws he will bark a dead stick as neatly as you will with a penknife. But he does not refuse animal matter. A dead brother (his, not yours) makes a savoury meal for him; and a party of those Vorticellæ would stand a poor chance if he came across them. You may count these caddis baits by hundreds of thousands; whether the trout eat them case and all, is a question in these streams. In some rivers the trout do so; and what is curious, during the spring, have a regular gizzard, a temporary thickening of the coats of the stomach, to enable them to grind the pebbly cases of the caddises. See! here is one whose house is closed at both ends—'grillé,' as Pictet calls it, in his unrivalled monograph of the Genevese Phryganeæ, on which he spent four years of untiring labour. The grub has stopped the mouth of his case by an open network of silk, defended by small pebbles, through which the water may pass freely, while he changes into his nymph state. Open the case; you find within not a grub, but a strange bird-beaked creature, with long legs and horns laid flat by its sides, and miniature wings on its back. Observe that the sides of the tail, and one pair of legs, are fringed with dark hairs. After a fortnight's rest in this prison this 'nymph' will gnaw her way out and swim through the water on her back, by means of that fringed tail and paddles till she reaches the bank and the upper air. There, under the genial light of day, her skin will burst, and a four-winged fly emerge, to buzz over the water as a fawn-coloured Caperer—deadliest of trout flies; if she be not snapped up beforehand under water by some spotted monarch in search of supper.

But look again among this tangled mass of weed. Here are more larvæ of water-flies. Some have the sides fringed with what look like paddles, but which are gills. Of these one part have whisks at the tail, and swim freely. They will change into ephemeræ, cock-winged 'duns,' with long whisked tails. The larvæ of the famous green drake (Ephemera vulgata) are like these, but we shall not find them. They are all changed by now into the perfect fly, and if not, they burrow about the banks, and haunt the crayfish-holes, and are not easily found.

Some, again, have the gills on their sides larger and broader, and no whisks at the tail. These are the larvæ of Sialis, the black alder, Lord Stowell's fly, shorm fly, hunch-back of the Welsh, with which we have caught our best fish to-day.

And here is one of a delicate yellow-green, whose tail is furnished with three broad paddle-blades. These, I believe, are gills again. The larva, I believe, is that of the Yellow Sally—Chrysoperla viridis—a famous fly on hot days in May and June. Among the pebbles there, below the fall, we should have found, a month since, a similar but much larger grub, with two paddles at his tail. He is the 'creeper' of the northern streams, and changes to the great crawling stone fly (May-fly of Tweed), Perla bicaudata, an ugly creature, which runs on stones and posts, and kills right well on stormy days, when he is beaten into the stream. There. Now we have the larvæ of the four great trout-fly families, Phryganeæ, Ephemeræ, Sialidæ, Perlidæ; so you have no excuse for telling—as not only Cockneys, but really good sportsmen who write on fishing, have done—such fibs as, that the green drake comes out of a caddis-bait, or give such vague generalities as, 'this fly comes from a water-larva.'

These are, surely, in their imperfect and perfect states, food enough to fatten many a good trout: but they are not all. See these transparent brown snails, Limneæ and Succinæ, climbing about the posts; and these other pretty ones, coil laid within coil as flat as a shilling, Planorbis. Many a million of these do the trout pick off the weed day by day; and no food, not even the leech, which swarms here, is more fattening. The finest trout of the high Snowdon lakes feed almost entirely on leech and snail—baits they have none—and fatten till they cut as red as a salmon.

Look here too, once more. You see a grey moving cloud about that pebbled bed, and underneath that bank. It is a countless swarm of 'sug,' or water-shrimp; a bad food, but devoured greedily by the great trout in certain overstocked preserves.

Add to these plenty of minnow, stone-loach, and miller's thumbs, a second course of young crayfish, and for one gormandizing week of bliss, thousands of the great green-drake fly: and you have food enough for a stock of trout which surprise, by their size and number, an angler fresh from the mountain districts of the north and west. To such a fisherman, the tale of Mr. * * *, of Ramsbury, who is said to have killed in one day in his own streams on Kennet, seventy-six trout, all above a pound, sounds like a traveller's imagination; yet the fact is, I believe, accurately true.

This, however, is an extraordinary case upon an extraordinary stream. In general, if a man shall bring home (beside small fish) a couple of brace of from one to three pounds a-piece, he may consider himself as a happy man, and that the heavens have not shone, but frowned, upon him very propitiously.

And now comes another and an important question.

For which of all these dainty eatables, if for any, do the trout take our flies? and from that arises another. Why are the flies with which we have been fishing this morning so large—of the size which is usually employed on a Scotch lake? You are a North-country fisher, and are wont, upon your clear streams, to fish with nothing but the smallest gnats. And yet our streams are as clear as yours—what can be clearer?

Whether fish really mistake our artificial flies for different species of natural ones, as Englishmen hold; or merely for something good to eat, the colour whereof strikes their fancy, as Scotchmen think; a theory which has been stated in detail, and with great semblance of truth, in Mr. Stewart's admirable Practical Angler, is a matter about which much good sense has been written on both sides.

Whosoever will, may find the great controversy fully discussed in the pages of Ephemera. Perhaps (as in most cases) the truth lies between the two extremes; at least, in a chalk-stream.

Ephemera's list of flies may be very excellent, but it is about ten times as long as would be required for any of our southern streams. Six or seven sort of flies ought to suffice for any fisherman; if they will not kill, the thing which will kill is yet to seek.

To name them:—

1. The caperer.
2. The March-brown.
3. The governor.
4. The black alder.

And two or three large palmers, red, grizzled, and coch-a-bonddhu, each with a tuft of red floss silk at the tail. These are enough to show sport from March to October; and also like enough to certain natural flies to satisfy the somewhat dull memory of a trout.

But beyond this list there is little use in roaming, as far as my experience goes. A yellow dun kills sometimes marvellously on chalk-streams, and always upon rocky ones. A Turkey-brown ephemera, the wing made of the bright brown tail of the cock partridge, will, even just after the May-fly is off, show good sport in the forenoon, when he is on the water; and so will in the evening the claret spinner, to which he turns. Excellent patterns of these flies may be found in Ronalds: but after all, they are uncertain flies; and, as Harry Verney used to say, 'they casualty flies be all havers,' which sentence the reader, if he understands good Wessex, can doubtless translate for himself.

And there are evenings on which the fish take greedily small transparent ephemeræ. But, did you ever see large fish rise at these ephemeræ? and even if you did can you imitate the natural fly? And if you did, would it not be waste of time? For the experience of many good fishers is, that trout rise at these delicate duns, black gnats, and other microscopic trash, simply faute de mieux. They are hungry, as trout are six days in the week, just at sunset. A supper they must have, and they take what comes; but if you can give them anything better than the minute fairy, compact of equal parts of glass and wind, which naturalists call an Ephemera or Bætis, it will be most thankfully received, if there be ripple enough on the water (which there seldom is on a fine evening) to hide the line: but even though the water be still, take boldly your caperer or your white moth (either of them ten times as large as what the trout are rising at), hurl it boldly into a likely place, and let it lie quiet and sink, not attempting to draw or work it; and if you do not catch anything by that means, comfort yourself with the thought that there are others who can.

And now to go through our list, beginning with—

1. The caperer.

This perhaps is the best of all flies; it is certainly the one which will kill earliest and latest in the year; and though I would hardly go as far as a friend of mine, who boasts of never fishing with anything else, I believe it will, from March to October, take more trout, and possibly more grayling, than any other fly. Its basis is the woodcock wing; red hackle legs, which should be long and pale; and a thin mohair body, of different shades of red-brown, from a dark claret to a pale sandy. It may thus, tied of different sizes, do duty for half a dozen of the commonest flies; for the early claret (red-brown of Ronalds; a Nemoura, according to him), which is the first spring-fly; for the red spinner, or perfect form of the March-brown ephemera; for the soldier, the soft-winged reddish beetle which haunts the umbelliferous flowers, and being as soft in spirit as in flesh, perpetually falls into the water, and comes to grief therein; and last but not least, for the true caperers, or whole tribe of phryganidæ, of which a sketch was given just now. As a copy of them, the body should be of a pale red brown, all but sandy (but never snuff-coloured, as shop-girls often tie it), and its best hour is always in the evening. It kills well when fish are gorged with their morning meal of green drakes; and after the green drake is off, it is almost the only fly at which large trout care to look; a fact not to be wondered at when one considers that nearly two hundred species of English phryganidæ have been already described, and that at least half of them are of the fawn-tint of the caperer. Under the title of flame-brown, cinnamon, or red-hackle and rail's wing, a similar fly kills well in Ireland, and in Scotland also; and is sometimes the best sea-trout fly which can be laid on the water. Let this suffice for the caperer.

2. Of the March-brown ephemera there is little to be said, save to notice Ronalds' and Ephemera's excellent description, and Ephemera's good hint of fishing with more than one March-brown at once, viz., with a sandy-bodied male, and a greenish-bodied female. The fly is a worthy fly, and being easily imitated, gives great sport, in number rather than in size; for when the March-brown is out, the two or three pound fish are seldom on the move, preferring leeches, tom-toddies, and caddis-bait in the nether deeps, to lanky ephemeræ at the top; and if you should (as you may) get hold of a big fish on the fly, 'you'd best hit him in again,' as we say in Wessex; for he will be, like the Ancient Mariner—

> Long, and lank, and brown,
> As is the ribbed sea-sand.

3. The 'governor.'—In most sandy banks, and dry poor lawns, will be found numberless burrows of ground bees who have a great trick of tumbling into the water. Perhaps, like the honey bee, they are thirsty souls, and must needs go down to the river and drink; perhaps, like the honey bee, they rise into the air with some difficulty, and so in crossing a stream are apt to strike the further bank, and fall in. Be that as it may, an imitation of these little ground bees is a deadly fly the whole year round; and if worked within six inches of the shore, will sometimes fill a basket when there is not a fly on the water or a fish rising. There are those who never put up a cast of flies without one; and those, too, who have killed large salmon on him in the north of Scotland, when the streams are low.

His tie is simple enough. A pale partridge or woodcock wing, short red hackle legs, a peacock-herl body, and a tail—on which too much artistic skill can hardly be expended—of yellow floss silk, and gold twist or

tinsel. The orange-tailed governors 'of ye shops,' as the old drug-books would say, are all 'havers;' for the proper colour is a honey yellow. The mystery of this all-conquering tail seems to be, that it represents the yellow pollen, or 'bee bread' in the thighs or abdomen of the bee; whereof the bright colour, and perhaps the strong musky flavour, makes him an attractive and savoury morsel. Be that as it may, there is no better rule for a chalk stream than this—when you don't know what to fish with, try the governor.

4. The black alder (Sialis nigra, or Lutaria).

What shall be said, or not be said of this queen of flies? And what of Ephemera, who never mentions her? His alder fly is—I know not what; certainly not that black alder, shorm fly, Lord Stowell's fly, or hunchback, which kills the monsters of the deep, surpassed only by the green drake for one fortnight; but surpassing him in this, that she will kill on till September, from that happy day on which

> You find her out on every stalk
> Whene'er you take a river walk,
> When swifts at eve begin to hawk—

O thou beloved member of the brute creation! Songs have been written in praise of thee; statues would ere now have been erected to thee, had that hunch back and flabby wings of thine been 'susceptible of artistic treatment.' But ugly thou art in the eyes of the uninitiated vulgar; a little stumpy old maid, toddling about the world in a black bonnet and a brown cloak, laughed at by naughty boys, but doing good wherever thou comest, and leaving sweet memories behind thee; so sweet that the trout will rise at the ghost or sham of thee, for pure love of thy past kindnesses to them, months after thou hast departed from this sublunary sphere. What hours of bliss do I not owe

to thee! How have I seen, in the rich meads of Wey, after picking out wretched quarter-pounders all the morning on March-brown and red-hackle, the great trout rush from every hover to welcome thy first appearance among the sedges and buttercups! How often, late in August, on Thames, on Test, on Loddon-heads, have I seen the three and four-pound fish prefer thy dead image to any live reality. Have I not seen poor old Si. Wilder, king of Thames fishermen (now gone home to his rest), shaking his huge sides with delight over thy mighty deeds, as his fourteen-inch whiskers fluttered in the breeze like the horse-tail standard of some great Bashaw, while crystal Thames murmured over the white flints on Monkey Island shallow, and the soft breeze sighed in the colossal poplar spires, and the great trout rose and rose, and would not cease, at thee, my alder-fly? Have I not seen, after a day in which the earth below was iron, and the heavens above as brass, as the three-pounders would have thee, and thee alone, in the purple August dusk, old Moody's red face grow redder with excitement, half-proud at having advised me to 'put on' thee, half fearful lest we should catch all my lady's pet trout in one evening? Beloved alder fly! would that I could give thee a soul (if indeed thou hast not one already, thou, and all things which live), and make thee happy in all æons to come: but as it is, such immortality as I can I bestow on thee here, in small return for all the pleasant days thou hast bestowed on me.

Bah! I am becoming poetical; let us think how to tie an alder-fly.

The common tie is good enough. A brown mallard, or dark hen-pheasant tail for wing, a black hackle for legs, and the necessary peacock-herl body. A better still is that of Jones Jones Beddgelert, the famous fish-

ing clerk of Snowdonia, who makes the wing of dappled peacock-hen, and puts the black hackle on before the wings, in order to give the peculiar hunch-backed shape of the natural fly. Many a good fish has this tie killed. But the best pattern of all is tied from the mottled wing-feather of an Indian bustard; generally used, when it can be obtained, only for salmon flies. The brown and fawn check pattern of this feather seems to be peculiarly tempting to trout, especially to the large trout of Thames; though in every river where I have tried the alder, I have found the bustard wing facile princeps among all patterns of the fly.

Of palmers (the hairy caterpillars) are many sorts. Ephemera gives by far the best list yet published. Ronalds has also three good ones, but whether they are really taken by trout instead of the particular natural insects which he mentions, is not very certain. The little coch-a-bonddhu palmer, so killing upon moor streams, may probably be taken for young larvæ of the fox and oak-egger moths, abundant on all moors, upon trefoils, and other common plants; but the lowland caterpillars are so abundant and so various in colour that trout must be good entomologists to distinguish them. Some distinction they certainly make; for one palmer will kill where another does not: but this depends a good deal on the colour of the water: the red palmer being easily seen, will kill almost anywhere and any when, simply because it is easily seen; and both the grizzle and brown palmer may be made to kill by adding to the tail a tuft of red floss silk; for red, it would seem, has the same exciting effect on fish which it has upon many quadrupeds, possibly because it is the colour of flesh. The mackerel will often run greedily at a strip of scarlet cloth; and the most killing pike-fly I ever used had a body made of remnants of the hunts-

man's new 'pink.' Still, there are local palmers. On Thames, for instance, I have seldom failed with the grizzled palmer, while the brown has seldom succeeded, and the usually infallible red never. There is one more palmer worth trying, which Scotsmen, I believe, call the Royal Charlie; a coch-a-bonddhu or furnace hackle, over a body of gold-coloured floss silk, ribbed with broad gold tinsel. Both in Devonshire and in Hampshire this will kill great quantities of fish, wherever furzy or otherwise wild banks or oak-woods afford food for the oak-egger and fox moths, which children call 'Devil's Gold Rings,' and Scotsmen 'Hairy Oubits.'

Two hints more about palmers. They must not be worked on the top of the water, but used as stretchers; and allowed to sink as living caterpillars do; and next, they can hardly be too large or rough, provided that you have skill enough to get them into the water without a splash. I have killed well on Thames with one full three inches long, armed of course with two small hooks. With palmers—and perhaps with all baits—the rule is, the bigger the bait the bigger the fish. A large fish does not care to move except for a good mouthful. The best pike-fisher I know prefers a half-pound chub when he goes after one of his fifteen pound jack; and the largest pike I ever ran—and lost, alas!—who seemed of any weight above twenty pounds, was hooked on a live white fish of full three-quarters of a pound. Still, no good angler will despise the minute North country flies. In Yorkshire they are said to kill the large chalk trout of Driffield as well as the small limestone and grit fish of Craven; if so, the gentlemen of the Driffield Club, who are said to think nothing of killing three-pound fish on midge flies and cobweb tackle, must be (as canny Yorkshiremen are likely enough to be) the best anglers in England.

In one spot only in Yorkshire, as far as I know, do our large chalk flies kill: namely, in the lofty limestone tarn of Malham. There palmers, caperers, and rough black flies, of the largest Thames and Kennet sizes, seem the only attractive baits; and for this reason, that they are the flies of the place. The cinnamon phryganea comes up abundantly from among the stones; and the large peat moss to the west of the tarn abounds, as usual, in house-flies and bluebottles, and in the caterpillars of the fox and oak-egger moths: another proof that the most attractive flies are imitations of the real insects. On the other hand, there are said to be times when midges, and nothing else, will rise fish on some chalk streams. The delicate black hackle which Mr. Stewart praises so highly (and which should always be tied on a square sneck-bend hook), will kill in June and July; and on the Itchen, at Winchester, hardly any flies but small ones are used after the green drake is off. But there is one sad objection against these said midges—what becomes of your fish when hooked on one in a stream full of weeds (as all chalk streams are after June,) save

> One struggle more, and I am free
> From pangs which rend my heart in twain?

Winchester fishers have confessed to me that they lose three good fish out of every four in such cases; and as it seems pretty clear that chalk fish approve of no medium between very large flies and very small ones, I advise the young angler, whose temper is not yet schooled into perfect resignation, to spare his own feelings by fishing with a single large fly—say the governor in the forenoon, the caperer in the evening, regardless of the clearness of the water. I have seen flies large enough for April, raise fish excellently in Test and other clear streams in July and August; and

what is more, drag them up out of the weeds and into the landing-net, where midges would have lost them in the first scuffle.

So much for our leading chalk flies; all copies of live insects. Of the entomology of mountain streams little as yet is known: but a few scattered hints may suffice to show that in them, as well as in the chalk rivers, a little natural science might help the angler.

The well-known fact that smaller flies are required on the moors than in the lowlands, is easily explained by the fact that poorer soils and swifter streams produce smaller insects. The large Phryganeæ, or true caperers, whose caddis-baits love still pools and stagnant ditches, are there rare; and the office of water-scavenger is fulfilled by the Rhyacophiles (torrent-lovers) and Hydropsyches, whose tiny pebble-houses are fixed to the stones to resist the violence of the summer floods. In and out of them the tiny larva runs to find food, making in addition, in some species, galleries of earth along the surface of the stones, in which he takes his walks abroad in full security. In any of the brown rivulets of Windsor forest, toward the middle of summer, the pebble-houses of these little creatures may be seen in millions, studding every stone. To the Hydropsyches (species montana? or variegata? of Pictet) belongs that curious little Welsh fly, known in Snowdon by the name of the Gwynnant, whose tesselated wing is best imitated by brown mallard feather, and who so swarms in the lower lakes of Snowdon, that it is often necessary to use three of them on the line at once, all other flies being useless. It is perhaps the abundance of these tesselated Hydropsyches which makes the mallard wing the most useful in mountain districts, as the abundance of the fawn and grey Phryganidæ in the south of England makes the woodcock wing justly the favourite.

The Rhyacophiles, on the other hand, are mostly of a shining soot-grey, or almost black. These may be seen buzzing in hundreds over the pools on a wet evening, and with them the sooty Mystacides, called silver-horns in Scotland, from their antennæ, which are of preposterous length, and ringed prettily enough with black and white. These delicate fairies make moveable cases, or rather pipes, of the finest sand, generally curved, and resembling in shape the Dentalium shell. Guarded by these they hang in myriads on the smooth ledges of rock, where the water runs gently a few inches deep. These are abundant everywhere: but I never saw so many of them as in the exquisite Cother brook, near Middleham, in Yorkshire. In that delicious glen, while wading up beneath the ash-fringed crags of limestone, out of which the great ring ouzel (too wild, it seemed, to be afraid of man) hopped down fearlessly to feed upon the strand, or past flower-banks where the golden globe-flower, and the great blue geranium, and the giant campanula, bloomed beneath the white tassels of the bird-cherry, I could not tread upon the limestone slabs without crushing at every step hundreds of the delicate Mystacide tubes, which literally paved the shallow edge of the stream, and which would have been metamorphosed in due time into small sooty moth-like fairies, best represented, I should say, by the soft black-hackle which Mr. Stewart recommends as the most deadly of North-country flies. Not to these, however, but to the Phryganeæ (who, when sticks and pebbles fail, often make their tubes of sand, e. g. P. flava), should I refer the red-cow fly, which is almost the only autumn killer in the Dartmoor streams. A red cow-hair body and a woodcock wing is his type, and let those who want West-country trout remember him.

Another fly, common on some rocky streams, but more scarce in the chalk, is the 'Yellow Sally,' which entomologists, with truer appreciation of its colour, call Chrysoperla viridis. It may be bought at the shops; at least a yellow something of that name, but bearing no more resemblance to the delicate yellow-green natural fly, with its warm grey wings, than a Pre-Raphaelite portrait to the human being for whom it is meant. Copied, like most trout flies, from some traditional copy by the hands of cockney maidens, who never saw a fly in their lives, the mistake of a mistake, a sham raised to its tenth power, it stands a signal proof that anglers will never get good flies till they learn a little entomology themselves, and then teach it to the tackle makers. But if it cannot be bought, it can at least be made; and I should advise every one who fishes rocky streams in May and June, to dye for himself some hackles of a brilliant greenish-yellow, and in the most burning sunshine, when fish seem inclined to rise at no fly whatsoever, examine the boulders for the Chrysoperla, who runs over them, her wings laid flat on her back, her yellow legs moving as rapidly as a forest-fly's; try to imitate her, and use her on the stream, or on the nearest lake. Certain it is that in Snowdon this fly and the Gwynnant Hydropsyche will fill a creel in the most burning north-easter, when all other flies are useless; a sufficient disproof of the Scotch theory—that fish do not prefer the fly which is on the water.*

Another disproof may be found in the 'fern web,' 'bracken clock' of Scotland; the tiny cockchafer, with brown wing-cases and dark-green thorax, which

* The Ripon list of natural flies contains several other species of small Nemouridæ unknown to me, save one brown one, which is seen here, though rarely, in June.

abounds in some years in the hay-meadows, on the fern, or on the heads of umbelliferous flowers. The famous Loch-Awe fly, described as an alder-fly with a rail's wing, seems to be nothing but this fat little worthy: but the best plan is to make the wings, either buzz or hackle, of the bright neck-feather of the cock pheasant, thus gaining the metallic lustre of the beetle tribe. Tied thus, either in Devonshire or Snowdon, few flies surpass him when he is out. His fatness proves an attraction which the largest fish cannot resist.

The Ephemeræ, too, are far more important in rapid and rocky streams than in the deeper, stiller waters of the south. It is worth while for a good fish to rise at them there; the more luxurious chalk trout will seldom waste himself upon them, unless he be lying in shallow water, and has but to move a few inches upward.

But these Ephemeræ, like all other naiads, want working out. The species which Mr. Ronalds gives, are most of them, by his own confession, very uncertain. Of the Phryganidæ he seems to know little or nothing, mentioning but two species out of the two hundred which are said to inhabit Britain; and his land flies and beetles are in several cases quite wrongly named. However, the professed entomologists know but little of the mountain flies; and the angler who would help to work them out would confer a benefit on science, as well as on the 'gentle craft.' As yet the only approach to such a good work which I know of, is a little book on the trout flies of Ripon, with excellent engravings of the natural fly. The author's name is not given; but the book may be got at Ripon, and most valuable it must be to any North-country fisherman.

But come, we must not waste our time in talk, for

here is a cloud over the sun, and plenty more coming up behind, before a ruffling south-west breeze, as Shelley has it—

> Calling white clouds like flocks to feed in air.

Let us up and onward to that long still reach, which is now curling up fast before the breeze; there are large fish to be taken, one or two at least, even before the fly comes on. You need not change your flies; the cast which you have on—governor, and black alder—will take, if anything will. Only do not waste your time and muscle, as you are beginning to do, by hurling your flies wildly into the middle of the stream, on the chance of a fish being there. Fish are there, no doubt, but not feeding ones. They are sailing about and enjoying the warmth; but nothing more. If you want to find the hungry fish and to kill them, you must stand well back from the bank—or kneel down, if you are really in earnest about sport; and throw within a foot of the shore, above you or below (but if possible above) with a line short enough to manage easily; by which I mean short enough to enable you to lift your flies out of the water at each throw without hooking them in the docks and comfrey which grow along the brink. You must learn to raise your hand at the end of each throw, and lift the flies clean over the land-weeds, or you will lose time, and frighten all the fish, by crawling to the bank to unhook them. Believe me, one of the commonest mistakes into which young anglers fall is that of fishing in 'skip-jack broad;' in plain English, in mid-stream, where few fish, and those little ones, are to be caught. Those who wish for large fish work close under the banks, and seldom take a mid-stream cast, unless they see a fish rise there.

The reason of this is simple. Walking up the Strand in search of a dinner, a reasonable man will keep to the trottoir, and look in at the windows close to him, instead of parading up the mid-street. And even so do all wise and ancient trout. The banks are their shops; and thither they go for their dinners, driving their poor little children tyrannously out into the mid-river to fare as hap may hap. Over these children the tyro wastes his time, flogging the stream across and across for weary hours, while the big papas and mammas are comfortably under the bank, close at his feet, grubbing about the sides for water crickets, and not refusing at times a leech or a young crayfish, but perfectly ready to take a fly if you offer one large and tempting enough. They do but act on experience. All the largest surface-food—beetles, bees, and palmers—comes off the shore; and all the caperers and alders, after emerging from their pupa-cases, swim to the shore in order to change into the perfect insect in the open air. The perfect insects haunt sunny sedges and tree-stems—whence the one is often called the sedge, the other the alder-fly—and from thence drop into the trouts' mouths; and within six inches of the bank will the good angler work, all the more sedulously and even hopefully if he sees no fish rising. I have known good men say that they had rather *not* see fish on the rise, if the day be good; that they can get surer sport, and are less troubled with small fish, by making them rise; and certain it is, that a day when the fish are rising all over the stream is generally one of disappointment. They are then picking at Ephemeræ, or small gnats, which rise up from their pupa-state pretty equally all over the stream, and which, as I have said before, no man can imitate—at least well enough to kill in anything but a strong stream or ripple. And

even then it is a question whether the fish, which cover the surface with those fleeting rings of glass which Creswick alone knows how to paint, are really the large fish; and whether it is not wiser, instead of searching one's book through for some gnat which they will take perchance, to keep to the large standard flies and to the bank; save, of course, in those few glorious hours when the green drake is up, and every man may do what is right in the sight of his own eyes.

Another advantage of bank fishing is, that the fish sees the fly only for a moment. He has no long gaze at it, as it comes to him across the water. It either drops exactly over his nose, or sweeps down the stream straight upon him. He expects it to escape on shore the next moment, and chops at it fiercely and hastily, instead of following and examining. Add to this the fact that when he is under the bank there is far less chance of his seeing you; and duly considering these things, you will throw away no more time in drawing, at least in chalk-streams, flies over the watery wastes, to be snapped at now and then by herring-sized pinkeens. In rocky streams, where the quantity of bank food is far smaller, this rule will perhaps not hold good; though who knows not that his best fish are generally taken under some tree from which the little caterpillars (having determined on slow and deliberate suicide) are letting themselves down gently by a silken thread into the mouth of the spotted monarch, who has but to sail about and about, and pick them up one by one as they touch the stream?—A sight which makes one think (as does a herd of swine crunching acorns, each one of which might have become a 'builder oak') how Nature is never more magnificent than in her waste.

The next mistake, natural enough to the laziness of

fallen man, is that of fishing down-stream, and not up. What Mr. Stewart says on this point should be read by every tyro. By fishing up-stream, even against the wind, he will on an average kill twice as many trout as when fishing down. If trout are out and feeding on the shallows, up or down will simply make the difference of fish or no fish; and even in deeps, where the difference in the chance of not being seen is not so great, many more fish will be hooked by the man who fishes up-stream, simply because when he strikes he pulls the hook into the trout's mouth instead of out of it. But he who would obey Mr. Stewart in fishing up-stream must obey him also in discarding his light London rod, which is in three cases out of four as weak and 'floppy' in the middle as a waggon whip, and get to himself a stiff and powerful rod, strong enough to spin a minnow; whereby he will obtain, after some weeks of aching muscles, two good things—a fore-arm fit for a sculptor's model, and trout hooked and killed, instead of pricked and lost.

Killed, as well as hooked; for how large trout are to be killed in a weedy chalk-stream without a stiff rod which will take them down, is a question yet unsolved. Even the merest cockney will know, if he thinks, that weeds float with their points down-stream, and that therefore if a fish is to be brought through them without entangling, he must be 'combed' through them in the same direction. But how is this to be done, if a fish be hooked below you on a weak rod? With a strong rod indeed you can, at the chance of tearing out the hook, keep him by main force on the top of the water, till you have run past him and below him, shortening your line anyhow in loops—there is no time to wind it up with the reel—and then do what you might have done comfortably at first had you

been fishing up—viz., bring him down-stream, and let the water run through his gills, and drown him. But with a weak rod——Alas for the tyro! He catches one glimpse of a silver side plunging into the depths; he finds his rod double in his hand; he finds fish and flies stop suddenly somewhere; he rushes down to the spot, sees weeds waving around his line, and guesses from what he feels and sees that the fish is grubbing up-stream through them, five feet under water. He tugs downwards and backwards, but too late; the drop-fly is fast wrapt in horse-tail and water-grass, callitriche and potamogeton, and half a dozen more horrid things with long names and longer stems; and what remains but the fate of Campbell's Lord Ullin?—

> The waters wild went o'er his child,
> And he was left lamenting.

Unless, in fact, large fish can be got rapidly down-stream, the chance of killing them is very small; and therefore the man who fishes a willow-fringed brook downward, is worthy of no crown but Ophelia's, besides being likely enough, if he attempt to get down to his fish, to share her fate. The best fishermen, however, will come to shame in streams bordered by pollard willows, and among queer nooks, which can be only fished down-stream. I saw, but the other day, a fish hooked cleverly enough, by throwing to an inch where he ought to have been, and indeed was, and from the only point whence the throw could be made. Out of the water he came, head and tail, the moment he felt the hook, and showed a fair side over two pounds weight . . . . and then? Instead of running away, he ran right at the fisherman, for reasons which were but too patent. Between man and fish were ten yards of shallow, then a deep weedy bank, and then the hole which was his house. And for that weedy bank the

spotted monarch made, knowing that there he could drag himself clear of the fly, as perhaps he had done more than once before.

What was to be done? Take him down-stream through the weed? Alas, on the man's left hand an old pollard leant into the water, barring all downward movement. Jump in and run round? He had rather to run back from the bank, from fear of a loose line; the fish was coming at him so fast that there was no time to wind up. Safe into the weeds hurls the fish; the man, as soon as he finds the fish stop, jumps in mid-leg deep, and staggers up to him, in hopes of clearing; finds the dropper fast in the weeds, and the stretcher, which had been in the fish's mouth, wantoning somewhere in the depths—Quid plura? Let us draw a veil over that man's return to shore.

No mortal skill could have killed that fish. Mortal luck (which is sometimes, as most statesmen know, very great) might have done it, if the fish had been irretrievably fast hooked; as, per contra, I once saw a fish of nearly four pounds hooked just above an alder bush, on the same bank as the angler. The stream was swift: there was a great weed-bed above; the man had but about ten feet square of swiftwater to kill the trout in. Not a foot downstream could he take him; in fact, he had to pull him hard up-stream to keep him out of his hover in the alder roots. Three times that fish leapt into the air nearly a yard high; and, yet, so merciful is luck, and so firmly was he hooked, in five breathless minutes he was in the landing-net; and when he was there and safe ashore, just of the shape and colour of a silver spoon, his captor lay down panting upon the bank, and with Sir Hugh Evans, manifested 'a great dispositions to cry.' But it was a beautiful sight. A sharper round be-

tween man and fish never saw I fought upon this side of Merry England.

I saw onee, however, a cleverer, though not a more dashing feat. A handy little fellow (I wonder where he is now?) hooked a trout of nearly three pounds with his dropper, and at the same moment a post with his stretcher. What was to be done! To keep the fish pulling on him, and not on the post. And that, being favoured by standing on a four-foot bank, he did so well that he tired out the fish in some six feet square of water, stopping him and turning him beautifully whenever he tried to run, till I could get in to him with the landing-net. That was twenty years since. If the little man has progressed in his fishing as he ought, he should be now one of the finest anglers in England.

* * * * *

So. Thanks to bank fishing, we have, you see, landed three or four more good fish in the last two hours—And! What is here? An ugly two-pound chub, Chevin, 'Eehevin,' or Alderman, as the Freneh call him. How is this, keeper? I thought you allowed no sueh vermin in this water?

The keeper answers, with a grunt, that 'they allow themselves. That there always were ehub hereabouts, and always will be; for the more he takes out with the net, the more eome next day.'

Probably. No nets will exterminate these spawn-eating, fry-eating, all-eating pests, who devour the little trout, and starve the large ones, and at the first sign of the net, fly to hover among the most tangled roots. There they lie, as close as rats in a bank, and work themselves the farther in the more they are splashed and poked by the poles of the beaters. But the fly, well used, will—if not exterminate them

—still thin them down greatly; and very good sport they give, in my opinion, in spite of the contempt in which they are commonly held, as chicken-hearted fish, who show no fight. True; but their very cowardice makes them the more difficult to catch; for no fish must you keep more out of sight, and further off. The very shadow of the line, (not to mention that of the rod) sends them flying to hover; and they rise so cautiously and quietly, that they give excellent lessons in patience and nerve to a beginner. If the fly is dragged along the surface, or jerked suddenly from them, they flee from it in terror; and when they do, after due deliberation, take it in, their rise is so quiet, that you can seldom tell whether your fish weighs half-a-pound or four pounds and a half—unless you, like most beginners, attempt to show your quickness by that most useless exertion, a violent strike. Then, the snapping of your footlink, or (just as likely) of the top of your rod, makes you fully aware, if not of the pluck, at least of the brute strength, of the burly alderman of the waters. No fish, therefore, will better teach the beginner the good old lesson, 'not to frighten a fish before you have tired him.'

For flies—chub will rise greedily at any large palmers, the larger and rougher the better. A red and a grizzled hackle will always take them; but the best fly of all is an imitation of the black beetle—the 'undertaker' of the London shops. He, too, can hardly be too large, and should be made of a fat body of black wool, with the metallic black feather of a cock's tail wrapped loosely over it. A still better wing is one of the neck feathers of any metallic-plumed bird, e.g., Phlogophorus Impeyanus, the Menaul Pheasant, laid flat and whole on the back, to imitate the wing-shells of the beetle, the legs being repre-

sented by any loose black feathers—(not hackles, which are too fine). Tied thus, it will kill not only every chub in a pool (if you give the survivors a quarter of an hour wherein to recover from their horror at their last friend's fate) but also, here and there, very large trout.

Another slur upon the noble sport of chub fishing is the fact of his not being worth eating—a fact which, in the true sportsman's eyes, will go for nothing. But though the man who can buy fresh soles and salmon may despise chub, there are those who do not. True, you may make a most accurate imitation of him by taking one of Palmer's patent candles, wick and all, stuffing it with needles and split bristles, and then stewing the same in ditch-water. Nevertheless, strange to say, the agricultural stomach digests chub; and if, after having filled your creel, or three creels (as you may too often) with them, you will distribute them on your way home to all the old women you meet, you will make many poor souls happy, after having saved the lives of many trout.

But here we come to a strip of thick cover, part of our Squire's home preserves, which it is impossible to fish, so closely do the boughs cover the water. We will walk on through it towards the hall, and there get—what we begin sorely to need—something to eat. It will be of little use fishing for some time to come; for these hot hours of the afternoon, from three till six, are generally the 'deadest time' of the whole day.

And now, when we have struggled in imagination through the last bit of copse, and tumbled over the palings into the lawn, we shall see a scene quite as lovely, if you will believe it, as any Alp on earth.

What shall we see as we look across the broad, still, clear river, where the great dark trout sail to and fro

lazily in the sun? For having free-warren of our fancy and our paper, we may see what we choose.

White chalk-fields above, quivering hazy in the heat. A park full of merry haymakers; gay red and blue wagons, stalwart horses, switching off the flies; dark avenues of tall elms; groups of abele, 'tossing their whispering silver to the sun;' and amid them the house—what manner of house shall it be? Tudor or Elizabethan, with oriels, mullioned windows, gables, and turrets of strange shape? No: that is commonplace. Everybody builds Tudor houses now. Our house shall smack of Inigo Jones or Christopher Wren; a great square red-brick mass, made light and cheerful though, by coins and windows of white sarsden-stone; with high-peaked French roofs, broken by louvers and dormers, haunted by a thousand swallows and starlings. Old walled gardens, gay with flowers, shall stretch right and left. Clipt yew alleys shall wander away into mysterious glooms: and out of their black arches shall come tripping children, like white fairies, to laugh and talk with the girl who lies dreaming and reading in the hammock there, beneath the black velvet canopy of the great cedar-tree, like some fair Tropic flower hanging from its boughs. Then they shall wander down across the smooth-shorn lawn, where the purple rhododendrons hang double, bush and image, over the water's edge, and call to us across the stream, 'What sport?' and the old Squire shall beckon the keeper over the long stone bridge, and return with him bringing luncheon and good ale; and we will sit down, and eat and drink among the burdock leaves, and then watch the quiet house, and lawn and flowers, and fair human creatures, and shining water, all sleeping breathless in the glorious light beneath the glorious blue, till we doze off, lulled by the murmur of a thou-

sand insects, and the rich minstrelsy of nightingale and blackcap, thrush and dove.

Peaceful, graceful, complete English country life and country houses—everywhere finish and polish, Nature perfected by the wealth and art of peaceful centuries! Why should I exchange you, even for the sight of all the Alps, for bad roads, bad carriages, bad inns, bad food, bad washing, bad beds, and fleas, fleas, fleas?

Let that last thought be enough. There may be follies, there may be sorrows, there may be sins (though I know there are no very heavy ones), in that fine old house opposite: but thanks to the genius of my native land, there are at least no fleas.

Think of that, wandering friend; and of this also, that you will find your warm bath ready when you go to bed to-night, and your cold one when you rise to-morrow morning; and in content and thankfulness, stay in England, and be clean.

* * * * *

Here, then, let us lounge a full two hours, too comfortable and too tired to care for fishing, till the hall-bell rings for that dinner which we as good anglers will despise. Then we will make our way to the broad reaches above the house. The evening breeze should be ruffling it gallantly; and see, the fly is getting up. The countless thousands are rising off the grass and flickering to and fro above the stream. Stand still a moment, and you will hear the air full of the soft rustle of innumerable wings. Hundreds more, even more delicate and gauzy, are rising through the water and floating helplessly along the surface, as Aphrodite may have done when she rose in the Ægean, half frightened at the sight of the new upper world.

And, see, the great trout are moving everywhere. Fish too large and well fed to care for the fly at any other season, who have been lounging among the weeds all day and snapping at passing minnows, have come to the surface; and are feeding steadily, splashing five or six times in succession, and then going down awhile to bolt their mouthful of victims; while here and there a heavy silent swirl tells of a fly taken before it has reached the surface, untimely slain before it has seen the day.

Now—put your Green-drake on; and throw, regardless of bank-fishing or any other rule, wherever you see a fish rise. Do not work your flies in the least, but let them float down over the fish, or sink if they will; he is more likely to take them under water than on the top. And mind this rule; be patient with your fish; and do not fancy that because he does not rise to you the first or the tenth time, therefore he will not rise at all. He may have filled his mouth and gone down to gorge; and when he comes up again, if your fly be the first which he meets, he will probably seize it greedily, and all the more so if it be under water, so seeming drowned and helpless. Besides, a fish seldom rises twice exactly in the same place, unless he be lying between two weeds, or in the corner of an eddy. His small wits, when he is feeding in the open, seem to hint to him that after having found a fly in one place he must move a foot or two on to find another; and therefore it may be some time before your turn comes, and your fly passes just over his nose; which if it do not do, he certainly will not, amid such an abundance, go out of his way for it. In the meanwhile your footlink will very probably have hit him over the back, or run foul of his nose, in

which case you will not catch him at all. A painful fact for you; but if you could catch every fish you saw, where would be the trout for next season?

Put on a dropper of some kind, say a caperer, as a second chance. I almost prefer the dark claret-spinner, with which I have killed very large fish alternately with the green drake, even when it was quite dark; and for your stretcher, of course a green-drake.

For a blustering evening like this your drake can hardly be too large or too rough; in brighter and stiller weather the fish often prefer a fly half the size of the natural one. Only bear in mind that the most tempting form among these millions of drakes is that one whose wings are very little coloured at all, of a pale greenish yellow; whose body is straw-coloured, and his head, thorax, and legs, spotted with dark brown—best represented by a pheasant or coch-a-bonddhu hackle.

The best imitation of this, or of any drake, which I have ever seen, is one by Mr. Macgowan, whilome of Ballyshannon, now of No. 7, Bruton-street, Berkeley-square, whose drakes, known by a waxy body of some mysterious material, do surpass those of all other men, and should be known and honoured far and wide. But failing them, you may do well with a drake which is ribbed through the whole length with red hackle over a straw-coloured body. A North countryman would laugh at it, and ask us how we fancy that fish will mistake for that delicate waxy fly a heavy rough palmer, made heavier and rougher by two thick tufts of yellow mallard wing: but if he will fish therewith, he will catch trout; and mighty ones they will be. I have found, again and again, this drake, in which the hackle is ribbed all down the body, beat a bare-bodied one in the ratio of three fish to one. The reason is difficult to guess.

Perhaps the shining transparent hackle gives the fly more of the waxy look of the natural insect; or perhaps the 'buzzy' look of the fly causes the fish to mistake it for one half-emerged from its pupa case, fluttering, entangled, and helpless. But whatever be the cause, I am sure of the fact. Now—silence and sport for the next three hours.

* * * * *

There! All things must end. It is so dark that I have been fishing for the last five minutes without any end fly; and we have lost our two last fish simply by not being able to guide them into the net. But what an evening's sport we have had! Beside several over a pound which I have thrown in (I trust you have been generous and done likewise), there are six fish averaging two pounds a-piece; and what is the weight of that monster with whom I saw you wrestling dimly through the dusk, your legs stuck knee-deep in a mudbank, your head embowered in nettles, while the keeper waltzed round you, roaring mere incoherencies? —four pounds full. Now, is there any sherry left in the flask? No. Then we will give the keeper five shillings; he is well worth his pay; and then drag our weary limbs toward the hall to bath and bed, while you confess, I trust, that you may get noble sport, hard exercise, and lovely scenery, without going sixty miles from London town.

TENNYSON.*

CRITICS cannot in general be too punctilious in their respect for an incognito. If an author intended us to know his name, he would put it on his title-page. If he does not choose to do that, we have no more right to pry into his secret than we have to discuss his family affairs or open his letters. But every rule has its exceptional cases; and the book which stands first upon our list is surely such. All the world, somehow or other, knows the author. His name has been mentioned unhesitatingly by several reviews already, whether from private information, or from the certainty which every well-read person must feel that there is but one man in England possessed at once of poetic talent and artistic experience sufficient for so noble a creation. We hope, therefore, that we shall not be considered impertinent if we ignore an incognito which all England has ignored before us, and attribute In Memoriam to the pen of the author of The Princess.

Such a course will probably be the more useful one to our readers; for this last work of our only living great poet seems to us at once the culmination of all his efforts and the key to many difficulties in his former

* Fraser's Magazine, Sept. 1850.—1. 'In Memoriam.' Moxon, Dover-street. 1850.—2. 'The Princess, a Medley.' By Alfred Tennyson. Third Edition. Moxon, Dover-street. 1850.—3. 'Poems.' By Alfred Tennyson. Moxon, Dover-street. 1842.

writings. Heaven forbid that we should say that it completes the circle of his powers. On the contrary it gives us hope of broader effort in new fields of thought and forms of art. But it brings the development of his Muse and of his Creed to a positive and definite point. It enables us to claim one who has been hitherto regarded as belonging to a merely speculative and peirastic school as the willing and deliberate champion of vital Christianity, and of an orthodoxy the more sincere because it has worked upward through the abyss of doubt; the more mighty for good because it justifies and consecrates the æstheties and the philosophy of the present age. We are sure, moreover, that the author, whatever right reasons he may have had for concealing his own name, would have no quarrel against us for alluding to it, were he aware of the idolatry with which every utterance of his is regarded by the cultivated young men of our day, especially at the universities, and of the infinite service of which this In Memoriam may be to them, if they are taught by it that their superiors are not ashamed of faith, and that they will rise instead of falling, fulfil instead of denying the cravings of their hearts and intellects, if they will pass upwards with their teacher from the vague though noble expectations of Locksley Hall, to the assured and everlasting facts of the proem to In Memoriam,—in our eyes the noblest Christian poem which England has produced for two centuries.

To explain our meaning, it will be necessary, perhaps, to go back to Mr. Tennyson's earlier writings, of which he is said to be somewhat ashamed now—a fastidiousness with which we will not quarrel; for it should be the rule of the poet, forgetting those things which are behind, to press on to those things which are before, and 'to count not himself to have apprehended,

but'—— no, we will not finish the quotation: let the readers of In Memoriam finish it for themselves, and see how after all the poet, if he would reach perfection, must be found by Him who found St. Paul of old. In the meantime, as a true poet must necessarily be in advance of his age, Mr. Tennyson's earlier poems, rather than these latter ones, coincide with the tastes and speculations of the young men of this day. And in proportion, we believe, as they thoroughly appreciate the distinctive peculiarities of those poems, will they be able to follow the author of them on his upward path.

Some of our readers, we would fain hope, remember as an era in their lives the first day on which they read those earlier poems; how, fifteen years ago, Mariana in the Moated Grange, The Dying Swan, The Lady of Shalott, came to them as revelations. They seemed to themselves to have found at last a poet who promised not only to combine the cunning melody of Moore, the rich fulness of Keats, and the simplicity of Wordsworth, but one who was introducing a method of observing Nature different from that of all the three, and yet succeeding in everything which they had attempted, often in vain. Both Keats and Moore had an eye for the beauty which lay in trivial and daily objects. But in both of them there was a want of deep religious reverence, which kept Moore playing gracefully upon the surface of phenomena without ever daring to dive into their laws or inner meaning; and made poor Keats fancy that he was rather to render Nature poetical by bespangling her with florid ornament, than simply to confess that she was already, by the grace of God, far beyond the need of his paint and gilding. Even Wordsworth himself had not full faith in the great dicta which he laid down in his famous Introductory Essay. Deep as was his conviction that Nature bore upon her sim-

plest forms the finger-mark of God, he did not always dare simply to describe her as she was, and leave her to reveal her own mystery. We do not say this in depreciation of one who stands now far above human praise or blame. The wonder is, not that Wordsworth rose no higher, but that, considering the level on which his taste was formed, he had power to rise to the height above his age which he did attain. He did a mighty work. He has left the marks of his teaching upon every poet who has written verses worth reading for the last twenty years. The idea by which he conquered was, as Coleridge well sets forth, the very one which, in its practical results on his own poetry, procured him loud and deserved ridicule. This, which will be the root idea of the whole poetry of this generation, was the dignity of Nature in all her manifestations, and not merely in those which may happen to suit the fastidiousness or Manichæism of any particular age. He may have been at times fanatical on his idea, and have misused it, till it became self-contradictory, because he could not see the correlative truths which should have limited it. But it is by fanatics, by men of one great thought, that great works are done; and it is good for the time that a man arose in it of fearless honesty enough to write Peter Bells and Idiot Boys, to shake all the old methods of nature-painting to their roots, and set every man seriously to ask himself what he meant, or whether he meant anything real, reverent, or honest, when he talked about 'poetic diction,' or 'the beauties of Nature.' And after all, like all fanatics, Wordsworth was better than his own creed. As Coleridge thoroughly shows in the second volume of the Biographia Litteraria, and as may be seen nowhere more strikingly than in his grand posthumous work, his noblest poems and noblest stanzas are those in

which his true poetic genius, unconsciously to himself, sets at naught his own pseudo-naturalist dogmas.

Now Mr. Tennyson, while fully adopting Wordsworth's principle from the very first, seemed by instinctive taste to have escaped the snares which had proved too subtle both for Keats and Wordsworth. Doubtless there are slight niaiseries, after the manner of both those poets, in the first editions of his earlier poems. He seems, like most other great artists, to have first tried imitations of various styles which already existed, before he learnt the art of incorporating them into his own, and learning from all his predecessors, without losing his own individual peculiarities. But there are descriptive passages in them also which neither Keats nor Wordsworth could have written, combining the honest sensuous observation which is common to them both, with a self-restrained simplicity which Keats did not live long enough to attain, and a stately and accurate melody, an earnest songfulness (to coin a word) which Wordsworth seldom attained, and from his inaccurate and uncertain ear, still seldomer preserved without the occurrence of a jar or a rattle, a false quantity, a false rapture, or a bathos. And above all, or rather beneath all—for we suspect that this has been throughout the very secret of Mr. Tennyson's power—there was a hush and a reverent awe, a sense of the mystery, the infinitude, the awfulness, as well as of the mere beauty of wayside things, which invested these poems as wholes with a peculiar richness, depth, and majesty of tone, beside which both Keats' and Wordsworth's methods of handling pastoral subjects looked like the colouring of Julio Romano or Watteau by the side of Correggio or Titian.

This deep, simple faith in the divineness of Nature as she appears, which, in our eyes, is Mr. Tennyson's

differentia, is really the natural accompaniment of a quality at first sight its very opposite, and for which he is often blamed by a prosaic world; namely, his subjective and transcendental mysticism. It is the mystic, after all, who will describe Nature most simply, because he sees most in her; because he is most ready to believe that she will reveal to others the same message which she has revealed to him. Men like Behmen, Novalis, and Fourier, who can soar into the inner cloud-world of man's spirit, even though they lose their way there, dazzled by excess of wonder—men who, like Wordsworth, can give utterance to such subtle anthropologic wisdom as the Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, will for that very reason most humbly and patiently 'consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.' And even so it is just because Mr. Tennyson is, far more than Wordsworth, mystical, and what an ignorant and money-getting generation, idolatrous of mere sensuous activity, calls 'dreamy,' that he has become the greatest naturalistic poet which England has seen for several centuries: the same faculty which enabled him to draw such subtle subjective pictures of womanhood as Adeline, Isabel, and Eleanor, enabled him to see, and therefore simply to describe, in one of the most distinctive and successful of his earlier poems, how

> The creeping mosses and clambering weeds,
> And the willow branches hoar and dank,
> And the wavy swell of the soughing reeds,
> And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
> And the silvery marish-flowers that throng
> The desolate creeks and pools among,
> Were flooded over with eddying song.

No doubt there are in the earlier poems exceptions to this style,—attempts to adorn Nature, and dazzle with a barbaric splendour akin to that of Keats,—as, for instance, in the Recollections of the Arabian

Nights. But how cold and gaudy, in spite of individual beauties, is that poem by the side of either of the Marianas, and especially of that one in which the scenery is drawn, simply and faithfully, from those counties which the world considers the quintessence of the prosaic—the English fens.

Upon the middle of the night
  Waking she heard the night-fowl crow;
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
  From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her: without hope of change,
  In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
  Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
  * * * * * * *

About a stone-cast from the wall
  A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
  The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
  All silver-green with gnarled bark,
  For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
  * * * * * * *

Throughout all these exquisite lines occurs but one instance of what the vulgar call 'poetic diction.' All is simple description, in short and Saxon words, and yet who can deny the effect to be perfect—superior to any similar passage in Wordsworth? And why? Because the passage quoted, and indeed the whole poem, is perfect in what artists call tone—tone in the metre and in the sound of the words, as well as in the images and the feelings expressed. The weariness, the dreariness, the dark mysterious waste, exist alike within and without, in the slow monotonous pace of the metre and the words, as well as in the boundless fen, and the heart of her who, 'without hope of change, in sleep did seem to walk forlorn.'

The same faith in Nature, the same instinctive cor-

rectness in melody, springing from that correct insight into Nature, ran through the poems inspired by mediæval legends. The very spirit of the old ballad writers, with their combinations of mysticism and objectivity, their freedom from any self-conscious attempt at reflective epithets or figures, runs through them all. We are never jarred in them, as we are in all the attempts at ballad-writing and ballad-restoring before Mr. Tennyson's time, by discordant touches of the reflective in thought, the picturesque in Nature, or the theatric in action. To illustrate our meaning, readers may remember the ballad of Fair Emmeline, in Bishop Percy's Reliques. The bishop confesses, if we mistake not, to have patched one end of the ballad. He need not have informed us of that fact, while such lines as these following meet our eyes—

> The Baron turned aside,
> And wiped away the rising tears
> He proudly strove to hide.

No old ballad writer would have used such a complicated concetto! Another, and even a worse instance is to be found in the difference between the old and new versions of the grand ballad of Glasgerion. In the original, we hear how the elfin harper could

> Harp fish out of the water,
> And water out of a stone,
> And milk out of a maiden's breast
> That bairn had never none.

For which some benighted 'restorer' substitutes—

> Oh, there was magic in his touch,
> And sorcery in his string!

No doubt there was. But while the new poetaster informs you of the abstract notion, the ancient poet gives you the concrete fact; as Mr. Tennyson has done with wonderful art in his exquisite St. Agnes, where

the saint's subjective mysticism appears only as embodied in objective pictures—

> Break up the heavens, oh, Lord! and far
> Through all yon starlight keen
> Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
> In raiment white and clean.

Sir Walter Scott's ballads fail just on the same point. Even Campbell cannot avoid an occasional false note of sentiment. In Mr. Tennyson alone, as we think, the spirit of the Middle Age is perfectly reflected; its delight, not in the 'sublime and picturesque,' but in the green leaves and spring flowers for their own sake,—the spirit of Chaucer and of the Robin Hood Garland,—the naturalism which revels as much in the hedgerow and garden as in alps, and cataracts, and Italian skies, and the other strong stimulants to the faculty of admiration which the palled taste of an unhealthy age, from Keats and Byron down to Browning, has rushed abroad to seek. It is enough for Mr. Tennyson's truly English spirit to see how

> On either side the river lie
> Long fields of barley and of rye,
> That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
> And through the field the road runs by
> To many-tower'd Camelot.

Or how

> In the stormy east-wind straining,
> The pale yellow woods were waning,
> The broad stream in his banks complaining,
> Heavily the low sky raining
> Over tower'd Camelot.

Give him but such scenery as that, which he can see in every parish in England, and he will find it a fit scene for an ideal myth, subtler than a casuist's questionings, deep as the deepest heart of woman.

But in this earlier volume the poet has not yet arrived at the art of combining his new speculations on

man with his new mode of viewing Nature. His objective pieces are too exclusively objective, his subjective too exclusively subjective; and where he deals with natural imagery in these latter, he is too apt, as in Eleanore, to fall back upon the old and received method of poetic diction, though he never indulges in a commonplace or a stock epithet. But in the interval between 1830 and 1842 the needful interfusion of the two elements has taken place. And in Locksley Hall and the Two Voices we find the new doubts and questions of the time embodied naturally and organically, in his own method of simple natural expression. For instance, from the Search for Truth in the Two Voices—

> Cry, faint not, climb: the summits lope
> Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
> Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.
>
> Sometimes a little corner shines,
> As over rainy mist inclines
> A gleaming crag with belts of pines.
>
> 'I will go forward,' sayest thou;
> 'I shall not fail to find her now.
> Look up, the fold is on her brow.'

Or again, in Locksley Hall, the poem which, as we think deservedly, has had most influence on the minds of the young men of our day—

> Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,
> And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
> Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;
> And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
> Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;
> Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
> That which they have done but earnest of the things which they shall do:

and all the grand prophetic passage following, which is said, we know not how truly, to have won for the poet

the respect of that great statesman whose loss all good men deplore.

In saying that Locksley Hall has deservedly had so great an influence over the minds of the young, we shall, we are afraid, have offended some who are accustomed to consider that poem as Werterian and unhealthy. But, in reality, the spirit of the poem is simply anti-Werterian. It is man rising out of sickness into health,—not conquered by Werterism, but conquering his selfish sorrow, and the moral and intellectual paralysis which it produces, by faith and hope,—faith in the progress of science and civilization, hope in the final triumph of good. Doubtless, that is not the highest deliverance,—not a permanent deliverance at all. Faith in God and hope in Christ alone can deliver a man once and for all, from Werterism, or any other moral disease; that truth was reserved for In Memoriam: but as far as Locksley Hall goes, it is a step forward—a whole moral æon beyond Byron and Shelley; and a step, too, in the right direction, just because it is a step forward,—because the path of deliverance is, as Locksley Hall sets forth, not backwards towards a fancied paradise of childhood—not backward to grope after an unconsciousness which is now impossible, an implicit faith which would be unworthy of the man, but forward on the road on which God has been leading him, carrying upward with him the aspirations of childhood, and the bitter experience of youth, to help the organized and trustful labour of manhood. There are, in fact, only two deliverances from Werterism possible in the nineteenth century; one is into Popery, and the other is—

> Forward, forward, let us range;
> Let the peoples spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change;
> Through the shadow of the world we sweep into the younger day:
> Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

But such a combination of powers as Mr. Tennyson's naturally develop themselves into a high idyllic faculty; for it is the very essence of the idyl to set forth the poetry which lies in the simpler manifestations of Man and Nature; yet not explicitly, by a reflective moralizing on them, as almost all our idyllists—Cowper, Gray, Crabbe, and Wordsworth—have been in the habit of doing, but implicitly, by investing them all with a rich and delightful tone of colouring, perfect grace of manner, perfect melody of rhythm, which, like a gorgeous summer atmosphere, shall glorify without altering the most trivial and homely sights. And it is this very power, as exhibited in the Lord of Burleigh, Audley Court, and the Gardener's Daughter, which has made Mr. Tennyson, not merely the only English rival of Theocritus and Bion, but, in our opinion, as much their superior as modern England is superior to ancient Greece.

Yet in The Princess, perhaps, Mr. Tennyson rises higher still. The idyllic manner alternates with the satiric, the pathetic, even the sublime, by such imperceptible gradations, and continual delicate variations of key, that the harmonious medley of his style becomes the fit outward expression of the bizarre and yet harmonious fairy-land, in which his fancy ranges. In this work, too, Mr. Tennyson shows himself more than ever the poet of the day. In it more than ever the old is interpenetrated with the new—the domestic and scientific with the ideal and sentimental. He dares, in every page, to make use of modern words and notions, from which the mingled clumsiness and archaism of his compeers shrinks, as unpoetical. Though, as we just said, his stage is an ideal fairy-land, yet he has reached the ideal by the only true method,—by bringing the Middle Age forward to the Present one, and

not by ignoring the Present to fall back on a cold and galvanized Mediævalism; and thus he makes his 'Medley' a mirror of the nineteenth century, possessed of its own new art and science, its own new temptations and aspirations, and yet grounded on, and continually striving to reproduce, the forms and experiences of all past time. The idea, too, of The Princess is an essentially modern one. In every age women have been tempted, by the possession of superior beauty, intellect, or strength of will, to deny their own womanhood, and attempt to stand alone as men, whether on the ground of political intrigue, ascetic saintship, or philosophic pride. Cleopatra and St. Hedwiga, Madame de Staël and the Princess, are merely different manifestations of the same self-willed and proud longing of woman to unsex herself, and realize, single and self-sustained, some distorted and partial notion of her own as to what the 'angelic life' should be. Cleopatra acted out the pagan ideal of an angel; St. Hedwiga, the mediæval one; Madame de Staël hers, with the peculiar notions of her time as to what 'spirituel' might mean; and in The Princess Mr. Tennyson has embodied the ideal of that nobler, wider, purer, yet equally fallacious, because equally unnatural analogue, which we may meet too often up and down England now. He shows us the woman, when she takes her stand on the false masculine ground of intellect, working out her own moral punishment, by destroying in herself the tender heart of flesh: not even her vast purposes of philanthropy can preserve her, for they are built up, not on the womanhood which God has given her, but on her own self-will; they change, they fall, they become inconsistent, even as she does herself, till, at last, she loses all feminine sensibility; scornfully and stupidly she rejects and misunderstands the heart

of man; and then falling from pride to sternness, from sternness to sheer inhumanity, she punishes sisterly love as a crime, robs the mother of her child, and becomes all but a vengeful fury, with all the peculiar faults of woman, and none of the peculiar excellences of man.

The poem being, as its title imports, a medley of jest and earnest, allows a metrical licence, of which we are often tempted to wish that its author had not availed himself; yet the most unmetrical and apparently careless passages flow with a grace, a lightness, a colloquial ease and frolic, which perhaps only heighten the effect of the serious parts, and serve as a foil to set off the unrivalled finish and melody of these latter. In these come out all Mr. Tennyson's instinctive choice of tone, his mastery of language, which always fits the right word to the right thing, and that word always the simplest one, and the perfect ear for melody which makes it superfluous to set to music poetry which, read by the veriest schoolboy, makes music of itself. The poem, we are glad to say, is so well known that it seems unnecessary to quote from it; yet there are here and there gems of sound and expression of which, however well our readers may know them, we cannot forbear reminding them again. For instance, the end of the Idyl in book vii. beginning 'Come down, O maid' (the whole of which is perhaps one of the most perfect fruits of the poet's genius):—

> Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
> The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Who, after three such lines, will talk of English as a harsh and clumsy language, and seek in the effeminate and monotonous Italian for expressive melody of sound? Who cannot hear in them the rapid rippling

of the water, the stately calmness of the wood-dove's note, and, in the repetition of short syllables and soft liquids in the last line, the

> Murmuring of innumerable bees?

Or again, what combination of richness with simplicity in such a passage as this:—

> Breathe upon my brows;
> In that fine air I tremble, all the past
> Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
> I scarce believe, and all the rich to come
> Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels
> Athwart the smoke of burning leaves.

How Mr. Tennyson can have attained the prodigal fulness of thought and imagery which distinguishes this poem, and especially the last canto, without his style ever becoming overloaded, seldom even confused, is perhaps one of the greatest marvels of the whole production. The songs themselves, which have been inserted between the cantos in the last edition of the book, seem, perfect as they are, wasted and smothered among the surrounding fertility; till we discover that they stand there, not merely for the sake of their intrinsic beauty, but serve to call back the reader's mind, at every pause in the tale of the Princess's folly, to that very healthy ideal of womanhood which she has spurned.

At the end of the first canto, fresh from the description of the female college, with its professoresses, and hostleresses, and other Utopian monsters, we turn the page; and—

> As through the land at eve we went,
> And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
> We fell out, my wife and I,
> And kissed again with tears:
>
> And blessings on the falling-out
> That all the more endears,
> When we fall out with those we love,
> And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

Between the next two cantos intervenes the well-known cradle-song, perhaps the best of all; and at the next interval is the equally well-known bugle-song, the idea of which is that of twin-labour and twin-fame, in a pair of lovers.

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.

In the next, the memory of wife and child inspirits the soldier in the field; in the next, the sight of the fallen hero's child opens the sluices of his widow's tears; and in the last, and perhaps the most beautiful of all, the poet has succeeded, in the new edition, in super-adding a new form of emotion to a canto in which he seemed to have exhausted every resource of pathos which his subject allowed; and prepares us for the triumph of that art by which he makes us, after all, love the heroine whom he at first taught us to hate and despise, till we see that her naughtiness is after all one that must be kissed and not whipped out of her, and look on smiling while she repents, with Prince Harry of old, 'not in sackcloth and ashes, but in new silk and old sack:'—

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from Heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But, O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

We now come to In Memoriam; a collection of poems on a vast variety of subjects, but all united, as their name implies, to the memory of a departed friend. We know not whether to envy more—the poet the object of his admiration, or that object the monument which has been consecrated to his nobleness. For in this latest and highest volume, written at various intervals during a long series of years, all the poet's peculiar excellences, with all that he has acquired from others, seem to have been fused down into a perfect unity, and brought to bear on his subject with that care and finish which only a labour of love can inspire. We only now know the whole man, all his art, all his insight, all his faculty of discerning the più nell' uno, and the uno nell' più. As he says himself:—

> My love has talked with rocks and trees,
> He finds on misty mountain-ground;
> His own vast shadow glory-crowned;
> He sees himself in all he sees.

Everything reminds him of the dead. Every joy or sorrow of man, every aspect of nature, from

> The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
> The cattle huddled on the lea,

to

> The thousand waves of wheat
> That ripple round the lonely grange.

In every place where in old days they had met and conversed; in every dark wrestling of the spirit with the doubts and fears of manhood, throughout the whole outward universe of nature, and the whole inward universe of spirit, the soul of his dead friend broods—at first a memory shrouded in blank despair, then a living presence, a ministering spirit, answering doubts, calming fears, stirring up noble aspirations, utter humility, leading the poet upward step

by step to faith, and peace, and hope. Not that there runs throughout the book a conscious or organic method. The poems seem often merely to be united by the identity of their metre, so exquisitely chosen, that while the major rhyme in the second and third lines of each stanza gives the solidity and self-restraint required by such deep themes, the mournful minor rhyme of each first and fourth line always leads the ear to expect something beyond, and enables the poet's thoughts to wander sadly on, from stanza to stanza and poem to poem, in an endless chain of

> Linked sweetness long drawn out.

There are records of risings and fallings again, of alternate cloud and sunshine, throughout the book; earnest and passionate, yet never bitter; humble, yet never abject; with a depth and vehemence of affection 'passing the love of woman,' yet without a taint of sentimentality; self-restrained and dignified, without ever narrowing into artificial coldness; altogether rivalling the sonnets of Shakespeare; and all knit together into one spiritual unity by the proem at the opening of the volume—in our eyes, the noblest English Christian poem which several centuries have seen.

We shall not quote the very poems which we should most wish to sink into men's hearts. Let each man find for himself those which suit him best, and meditate on them in silence. They are fit only to be read solemnly in our purest and most thoughtful moods, in the solitude of our chamber, or by the side of those we love, with thanks to the great heart who has taken courage to bestow on us the record of his own friendship, doubt, and triumph.

It has been often asked why Mr. Tennyson's great

and varied powers had never been concentrated on one immortal work. The epic, the lyric, the idyllic faculties, perhaps the dramatic also, seemed to be all there, and yet all sundered, scattered about in small fragmentary poems. In Memoriam, as we think, explains the paradox. Mr. Tennyson had been employed on higher, more truly divine, and yet more truly human work than either epos or drama. Within the unseen and alone truly Real world which underlies and explains this mere time-shadow, which men miscall the Real, he had been going down into the depths, and ascending into the heights, led, like Dante of old, by the guiding of a mighty spirit. And in this volume, the record of seventeen years, we have the result of those spiritual experiences in a form calculated, as we believe, to be a priceless benefit to many an earnest seeker in this generation, and perhaps to stir up some who are priding themselves on a cold dilettantism and barren epicurism, into something like a living faith and hope. Blessed and delightful it is to find, that even in these new ages the creeds which so many fancy to be at their last gasp, are still the final and highest succour, not merely of the peasant and the outcast, but of the subtle artist and the daring speculator. Blessed it is to find the most cunning poet of our day able to combine the complicated rhythm and melody of modern times with the old truths which gave heart to martyrs at the stake; and to see in the science and the history of the nineteenth century new and living fulfilments of the words which we learnt at our mothers' knee. Blessed, thrice blessed, to find that hero-worship is not yet passed away; that the heart of man still beats young and fresh; that the old tales of David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, Socrates and Alcibiades, Shake-

speare and his nameless friend, of 'love passing the love of woman,' ennobled by its own humility, deeper than death, and mightier than the grave, can still blossom out, if it be but in one heart here and there, to show men still how sooner or later 'he that loveth knoweth God, for God is Love.'

THE POETRY OF SACRED AND LEGENDARY ART.*

MUCH attention has been excited this year by the alleged fulfilment of a prophecy that the Papal power was to receive its death-blow—in temporal matters, at least—during the past year 1848. For ourselves, we have no more faith in Mr. Fleming, the obsolete author, who has so suddenly revived in the public esteem, than we have in other interpreters of prophecy. Their shallow and bigoted views of past history are enough to damp our faith in their discernment of the future. It does seem that people ought to understand what has been, before they predict what will be. History is 'the track of God's footsteps through time;' it is in His dealings with our forefathers that we may expect to find the laws by which He will deal with us. Not that Mr. Fleming's conjecture must be false; among a thousand guesses there ought surely to be one right one. And it is almost impossible for earnest men to bend their whole minds, however clumsily, to one branch of study without arriving at some truth or other. The interpreters of prophecy therefore, like all other interpreters, have our best wishes, though not our sanguine hopes. But, in the meantime, there are surely signs of the approaching ruin of Popery, more certain than any speculations on

* Fraser's Magazine, March, 1849.—'Sacred and Legendary Art.' By Mrs. Jameson. 2 vols. London. 1848. Longman and Co.

the mystic numbers of the Revelation. We should point to recent books,—not to books which merely expose Rome—that has been done long ago, usque ad nauseam,—but to books which do her justice,—to Mr. Maitland's 'Dark Ages;' Lord Lindsay's 'Christian Art;' and last, but not least, to the very charming book of Mrs. Jameson, whose title heads this review. In them, and in a host of similar works in Germany, which Dr. Wiseman's party hail as signs of coming triumph, we fancy we see the death-warrant of Romanism; because they prove that Rome has nearly done her work,—that the Protestants are learning the lesson for the sake of which Providence has so long borne with that monstrous system. When Popery has no more truth to teach us, but not till then, will it vanish away into its native night.

We entreat Protestant readers not to be alarmed at us. We have not the slightest tendency toward the stimulants of Popery, either in their Roman unmixed state, or in their diluted Oxford form. We are, with all humility, more Protestant than Protestantism itself; our fastidious nostril, more sensitive of Jesuits than even those of the author of 'Hawkstone,' has led us at moments to fancy that we scent indulgences in Conduit-street Chapel, and discern inquisitors in Exeter Hall itself. Seriously, none believe more firmly than ourselves that the cause of Protestantism is the cause of liberty, of civilization, of truth; the cause of man and God. And because we think Mrs. Jameson's book especially Protestant, both in manner and intention, and likely to do service to the good cause, we are setting to work herein to praise and recommend it. For the time, we think, for calling Popery ill names is past; though to abstain is certainly sometimes a sore restraint for English

spirits, as Mrs. Jameson herself, we suspect, has found: but Romanism has been exposed, and refuted triumphantly, every month for centuries, and yet the Romish nations are not converted; and too many English families of late have found, by sad experience, that such arguments as are in vogue are powerless to dissuade the young from rushing headlong into the very superstitions which they have been taught from their childhood to deride. The truth is, Protestantism may well cry, 'Save me from my friends!' We have attacked Rome too often on shallow grounds, and finding our arguments weak, have found it necessary to overstate them. We have got angry, and caught up the first weapon which came to hand, and have only cut our own fingers. We have very nearly burnt the Church of England over our heads, in our hurry to make a bonfire of the Pope. We have been too proud to make ourselves acquainted with the very tenets which we exposed, and have made a merit of reading no Popish books but such as we were sure would give us a handle for attack, and not even them without the precaution of getting into a safe passion beforehand. We have dealt in exaggerations, in special pleadings, in vile and reckless imputations of motive, in suppressions of all palliating facts. We have outraged the common feelings of humanity by remaining blind to the virtues of noble and holy men because they were Papists, as if a good deed was not good in Italy as well as in England. We have talked as if God had doomed to hopeless vileness in this world and reprobation in the next millions of Christian people, simply because they were born of Romish and not of Protestant fathers. And we have our reward; we have fared like the old woman who would not tell the children what a well was for fear they should fall into

one. We see educated and pious Englishmen joining the Romish communion simply from ignorance of Rome, and have no talisman wherewith to disenchant them. Our medicines produce no effect on them, and all we can do is, like quacks, to increase the dose. Of course if ten boxes of Morison's pills have killed a man, it only proves that—he ought to have taken twelve of them. We are jesting, but as an Ulster Orangeman would say, 'it is in good Protestant earnest.'

In the meantime some of the deepest cravings of the human heart have been left utterly unsatisfied. And be it remembered, that such universal cravings are more than fancies; they are indications of deep spiritual wants, which, unless we supply them with the good food which God has made for them, will supply themselves with poison,—indications of spiritual faculties, which it is as wicked to stunt or distort by miseducation as it is to maim our own limbs or stupify our understanding. Our humanity is an awful and divine gift; our business is to educate it throughout—God alone must judge which part of it shall preponderate over the rest. But in the last generation—and, alas! in this also—little or no proper care has been taken of the love for all which is romantic, marvellous, heroic, which exists in every ingenuous child. Schoolboys, indeed, might, if they chose, in play-hours, gloat over the 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' or Lemprière's gods and goddesses; girls might, perhaps, be allowed to devour by stealth a few fairy tales, or the 'Arabian Nights;' but it was only by connivance that their longings were satisfied from the scraps of Moslemism, Paganism,—anywhere but from Christianity. Protestantism had nothing to do with the imagination,—in fact, it was a question whether reasonable people had any; whether the devil was not the original maker

of that troublesome faculty in man, woman, and child. Poetry itself was, with most parents, a dram, to be given, like Dalby's Carminative, as a pis aller, when children could not possibly be kept quiet by Miss Edgeworth or Mrs. Mangnall. Then, as the children grew up, and began to know something of history and art, two still higher cravings began to seize on many of them, if they were at all of deep and earnest character: a desire to associate with religion their new love for the beautiful, and a reverence for antiquity; a wish to find some bond of union between themselves and the fifteen centuries of Christianity which elapsed before the Reformation. They applied to Protestant teachers and Protestant books, and received too often the answer that the Gospel had nothing to do with art,—art was either Pagan or Popish; and as for the centuries before the Reformation, they and all in them belonged utterly to darkness and the pit. As for the heroes of early Christianity, they were madmen or humbugs; their legends, devilish and filthy puerilities. They went to the artists and literary men, and received the same answer. The medieval writers were fools. Classical art was the only art; all painters before the age of Raphael superstitious bunglers. To be sure, as Fuseli said, Christianity had helped art a little; but then it was the Christianity of Julio and Leone,—in short, of the worst age of Popery.

These falsehoods have worked out their own punishment. The young are examining for themselves, and finding that we have deceived them; a revulsion in their feelings has taken place, similar to that which took place in Germany some half-century ago. They are reading the histories of the Middle Ages, and if we call them barbarous—they will grant it, and then quote instances of individual heroism and piety, which they

defy us or any honest man not to admire. They are reading the old legends, and when we call them superstitious—they grant it, and then produce passages in which the highest doctrines of Christianity are embodied in the most pathetic and noble stories. They are looking for themselves at the ante-Raphaellic artists, and when we tell them that Fra Angelico's pictures are weak, affected, ill-drawn, ill-coloured—they grant it, and then ask us if we can deny the sweetness, the purity, the rapt devotion, the saintly virtue, which shines forth from his faces. They ask us how beautiful and holy words or figures can be inspired by an evil spirit. They ask us why they are to deny the excellence of tales and pictures which make men more pure and humble, more earnest and noble. They tell us truly that all beauty is God's stamp, and that all beauty ought to be consecrated to his service. And then they ask us, 'If Protestantism denies that she can consecrate the beautiful, how can you wonder if we love the Romanism which can? You say that Popery created these glorious schools of art: how can you wonder if, like Overbeck, 'we take the faith for the sake of the art which it inspired?''

To all which, be it true or false (and it is both), are we to answer merely by shutting our eyes and ears tight, and yelling 'No Popery!' or are we to say boldly to them, 'We confess ourselves in fault; we sympathize with your longings; we confess that Protestantism has not satisfied them; but we assert that the only cause is, that Protestantism has not been true to herself; that Art, like every other product of the free human spirit, is her domain, and not Popery's; that these legends, these pictures, are beautiful just in as far as they contain in them the germs of those eternal truths about man, nature, and God, which the

Reformation delivered from bondage; that you can admire them, and yet remain thorough Protestants; and more, that unless you do remain Protestants, you will never enter into their full beauty and significance, because you will lose sight of those very facts and ideas from which they derive all their healthy power over you?

These thoughts are not our own; they are uttered all over England, thank God! just now, by many voices and in many forms: if they had been boldly spoken during the last fifteen years, many a noble spirit, we believe, might have remained in the Church of its fathers which has now taken refuge in Romanism from the fruits of miseducation. One great reason why Romanism has been suffered to drag on its existence is, we humbly think, that it might force us at last to say this. We have been long learning the lesson; till we have learnt it thoroughly Romanism will exist, and we shall never be safe from its allurements.

These thoughts may help to explain our opening sentences, as well as the extreme pleasure with which we hail the appearance of Mrs. Jameson's work.

The authoress has been struck, during her examination of the works of Christian artists, with the extreme ignorance which prevails in England on the subjects which they portray.

We have had (she says, in an introduction, every word of which we recommend as replete with the truest Christian philosophy),—

Inquiries into the Principles of Taste, treatises on the Sublime and Beautiful, Anecdotes of Painting, and we abound in antiquarian essays on disputed pictures and mutilated statues; but up to a late period any inquiry into the true spirit and significance of works of art, as connected with the history of religion and civilization, would have appeared ridiculous, or, perhaps, dangerous. We should have had another cry of 'No Popery!' and Acts of Parliament prohibiting the importation of saints and Madonnas.—P. xxi.

And what should we have gained by it, but more ignorance of the excuses for Popery, and, therefore, of its real dangers? If Protestantism be the truth, knowledge of whatsoever kind can only further it. We have found it so in the case of classical literature. Why should we strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? Our boys have not taken to worshipping Jupiter and Juno by reading about them. We never feared that they would. We knew that we should not make them pagans by teaching them justly to admire the poetry, the philosophy, the personal virtues of pagans. And, in fact, the few who since the revival of letters have deserted Christianity for what they called philosophic heathenism, have in almost every case sympathized, not with the excellences, but with the worst vices of the Greek and Roman. They have been men like Leo X. or the Medici, who, ready to be profligates under any religion, found in heathenism only an excuse for their darling sins. The same will be the fruits of a real understanding of the mediæval religion. It will only endanger those who carried already the danger in themselves, and would have fallen into some other snare if this had been away. Why should we fancy that Protestantism, like the Romanism which it opposes, is a plant that will not bear the light, and can only be protected at the expense of the knowledge of facts? Why will we forget the great spiritual law which Mrs. Jameson and others in these days are fully recognising, that 'we cannot safely combat the errors of any man or system without first giving them full credit for whatever excellences they may retain?' Such a course is the true fruit of that free spirit of Protestantism which ought to delight in recognising good to whatever party it may belong; which asserts that every good gift and perfect gift comes directly from above, and not through

the channel of particular formularies or priesthoods; which, because it loves faith and virtue for their own sakes, and not as mere parts of a 'Catholic system,' can recognise them and delight in them wherever it finds them.

Upon these creations of ancient art (as Mrs. Jameson says) we cannot look as those did for whom they were created; we cannot annihilate the centuries which lie between us and them; we cannot, in simplicity of heart, forget the artist in the image he has placed before us, nor supply what may be deficient in his work through a reverentially excited fancy. We are critical, not credulous. We no longer accept this polytheistic form of Christianity; and there is little danger, I suppose, of our falling again into the strange excesses of superstition to which it led. But if I have not much sympathy with modern imitations of mediæval art, still less can I sympathize with that narrow puritanical jealousy which holds the monuments of a real and earnest faith in contempt: all that God has permitted to exist once in the past should be considered as the possession of the present; sacred for example or warning, and held as the foundation on which to build up what is better and purer.—Introd. p. xx.

Mrs. Jameson here speaks in the name of a large and rapidly increasing class. The craving for religious art, of which we spoke above, is spreading far and wide; even in dissenting chapels we see occasional attempts at architectural splendour, which would have been considered twenty years ago heretic or idolatrous. And yet with all this there is, as Mrs. Jameson says, a curious ignorance with regard to the subject of mediæval art, even though it has now become a reigning fashion among us.

We have learned, perhaps, after running through half the galleries and churches in Europe, to distinguish a few of the attributes and characteristic figures which meet us at every turn, yet without any clear idea of their meaning, derivation, or relative propriety. The palm of victory, we know, designates the martyr, triumphant in death. We so far emulate the critical sagacity of the gardener in Zeluco, that we have learned to distinguish St. Laurence by his gridiron, and St. Catherine by her wheel. We are not at a loss to recognise the Magdalene's 'loose hair and lifted eye,' even when without her skull and her vase of ointment. We learn to know St. Francis by his brown habit, and shaven crown, and wasted, ardent features; but how do we distinguish him from St. Anthony, or St.

Dominick? As for St. George and the dragon—from the St. George of the Louvre—Raphael's—who sits his horse with the elegant tranquillity of one assured of celestial aid, down to him 'who swings on a sign-post at mine hostess's door,'—he is our familiar acquaintance. But who is that lovely being in the first blush of youth, who, bearing aloft the symbolic cross, stands with one foot on the vanquished dragon? 'That is a copy after Raphael.' And who is that majestic creature holding her palm-branch, while the unicorn crouches at her feet? 'That is the famous Moretto at Vienna.' Are we satisfied? Not in the least! but we try to look wiser, and pass on.

In the old times, the painters of these legendary scenes and subjects could always reckon securely on certain associations and certain sympathies in the minds of the spectators. We have outgrown these associations, we repudiate these sympathies. We have taken these works from their consecrated localities, in which they once held each their dedicated place, and we have hung them in our drawing-rooms and our dressing-rooms, over our pianos and our sideboards, and now what do they say to us? That Magdalene, weeping amid her hair, who once spoke comfort to the soul of the fallen sinner,—that Sebastian, arrow-pierced, whose upward, ardent glance, spoke of courage and hope to the tyrant-ridden serf,—that poor tortured slave, to whose aid St. Mark comes sweeping down from above,—can they speak to us of nothing save flowing lines, and correct drawing, and gorgeous colour? Must we be told that one is a Titian, the other a Guido, the third a Tintoret, before we dare to melt into compassion or admiration? or the moment we refer to their ancient religious signification and influence, must it be with disdain or with pity? This, as it appears to me, is to take not a rational, but rather a most irrational, as well as a most irreverent, view of the question: it is to confine the pleasure and improvement to be derived from works of art within very narrow bounds; it is to seal up a fountain of the richest poetry, and to shut out a thousand ennobling and inspiring thoughts. Happily there is a growing appreciation of these larger principles of criticism as applied to the study of art. People look at the pictures which hang round their walls, and have an awakening suspicion that there is more in them than meets the eye—more than mere connoisseurship can interpret; and that they have another, a deeper significance than has been dreamed of by picture dealers and picture collectors, or even picture critics.—Introd. xxiii.

On these grounds Mrs. Jameson treats of the Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art. Her first volume contains a general sketch of the legends connected with angels, with the scriptural personages, and the primitive fathers. Her second, the histories of most of 'those sainted personages who lived, or are supposed to have

lived, in the first ages of Christianity, and whose real history, founded on fact or tradition, has been so disfigured by poetical embroidery that they have in some sort the air of ideal beings.' Each story is followed by a series of short, but brilliant, criticisms on those pictures in which the story has been embodied by painters of various schools and periods, and illustrated by numerous spirited etchings and woodcuts, which add greatly to the value and intelligibility of the work. A future volume is promised which shall contain the 'legends of the monastic orders, and the history of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, considered merely in their connexion with the revival and the development of the fine arts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries;'—a work which, if it equal the one before us, will doubtless be hailed by those conversant with that wonderful phase of human history as a valuable addition to our psychologic and æsthetic literature.

We ought to petition, also, for a volume which should contain the life of the Saviour, and the legends of the Virgin Mary; though this latter subject, we are afraid, will be too difficult for even Mrs. Jameson's tact and delicacy to make tolerable to English readers, so thoroughly has the Virgin Mary, as especial patroness of purity, been intermixed in her legends with every form of prudish and prurient foulmindedness.*

The authoress has wisely abstained from all controversial matters. In her preface she begs that it may be clearly understood, 'that she has taken throughout the æsthetic and not the religious view of these productions of art; which, in as far as they are informed with a true and earnest feeling, and steeped in that

* Since this was written, Mrs. Jameson's volume on the Legends of the Madonna has succeeded excellently in giving us, if not a complete, yet still a readable and modest picture of mediæval Mariolatry.

beauty which emanates from Genius inspired by Faith, may cease to be religion, but cannot cease to be poetry; and as poetry only,' she says, 'I have considered them.' In a word, Mrs. Jameson has done for them what schoolmasters and schoolboys, bishops and Royal Academicians, have been doing for centuries, by Greek plays and Greek statues, without having incurred, as we said above, the slightest suspicion of wanting to worship heathen gods and goddesses.

Not that she views these stories with the cold, unbelieving eye of a Goethe, merely as studies of 'artistic effect;' she often transgresses her rule of impartiality, and just where we should wish her to do so. Her geniality cannot avoid an occasional burst of feeling, such as concludes her notice of the stories about the Magdalene and the other 'beatified penitents.'

> Poets have sung, and moralists and sages have taught, that for the frail woman there was nothing left but to die; or if more remained for her to suffer, there was at least nothing left for her to be or do,—no choice between sackcloth and ashes and the livery of sin. The beatified penitents of the early Christian Church spoke another lesson,—spoke divinely of hope for the fallen, hope without self-abasement or defiance. We, in these days, acknowledge no such saints; we have even done our best to dethrone Mary Magdalene; but we have martyrs,—'by the pang without the palm,'—and one, at least, among these who has not died without lifting up a voice of eloquent and solemn warning; who has borne her palm on earth, and whose starry crown may be seen on high even now amid the constellations of Genius.—Vol. ii. p. 386.

To whom the authoress may allude in this touching passage our simplicity cannot guess in the least. We may, therefore, without the suspicion of partiality, say to the noble spirit of purity, compassion, and true liberality which breathes throughout this whole chapter, 'Go on and conquer.'

Nor again can Mrs. Jameson's English honesty avoid an occasional slip of delicate sarcasm; for instance, in the story of St. Filomena, a bran-new saint, whose

discovery at Rome in 1802, produced there an excitement which we should suspect was very much wanted, which we recommend to all our readers as an instance of the state into which the virtues of honesty and common sense seem to have fallen in the Eternal City—of humbugs.

No doubt there are many such cases of imposture among the list of saints and martyrs: yet, granting all which have been exposed, and more, there still remains a list of authentic stories, sadder and stranger than any romance of man's invention, to read which without deep sympathy and admiration our hearts must be callous or bigoted indeed. As Mrs. Jameson herself well says (vol. ii. p. 137):—

> When in the daily service of our Church we repeat these words of the sublime hymn ('The noble army of martyrs praise Thee!'), I wonder sometimes whether it be with a full appreciation of their meaning? whether we do really reflect on all that this noble army of martyrs has conquered for us? Did they indeed glorify God through their courage, and seal their faith in their Redeemer with their blood? And if it be so, how is it that we Christians have learned to look coldly upon the effigies of those who sowed the seed of the harvest which we have reaped?—Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum! We may admit that the reverence paid to them in former days was unreasonable and excessive; that credulity and ignorance have in many instances falsified the actions imputed to them; that enthusiasm has magnified their numbers beyond all belief; that when the communion with martyrs was associated with the presence of their material remains, the passion for relics led to a thousand abuses, and the belief in their intercession to a thousand superstitions. But why, in uprooting the false, uproot also the beautiful and the true?

Thoroughly and practically convinced as we are of the truth of these words, it gave us some pain when, in the work of a very worthy person, The Church in the Catacombs, by Dr. Maitland (not the author of The Dark Ages), we found, as far as we could perceive, a wish 'to advance the Protestant cause,' by throwing general doubt on the old martyrologies and their monu-

ments in the Roman catacombs. If we shall have judged hastily, we shall be ready to apologize. None, as we have said before, more firmly believe that the Protestant cause is the good cause; none are more reverentially inclined toward all honest critical investigations, more anxious to see all truth, the Bible itself, sifted and tested in every possible method; but we must protest against what certainly seems too contemptuous a rejection of a mass of historic evidence hitherto undoubted, except by the school of Voltaire; and of the hasty denial of the meaning of Christian and martyrologie symbols, as well known to antiquaries as Stonehenge or Magna Charta.

At the same time, Dr. Maitland's book seems the work of a righteous and earnest man, and it is not its object, but its method, of which we complain. The whole question of martyrology, a far more important one than historians generally fancy, requires a thorough investigation, critical and historical; it has to be done, and especially just now. The Germans, the civil engineers of the intellectual world, ought to do it for us, and no doubt will. But those who undertake it must bring to the work, not only impartiality, but enthusiasm; it is the spirit only, after all, which can quicken the eye, which can free the understanding from the idols of laziness, prejudice, and hasty induction. To talk philosophically of such matters a man must love them; he must set to work with a Christian sympathy, and a manly admiration for those old spiritual heroes to whose virtue and endurance Europe owes it that she is not now a den of heathen savages. He must be ready to assume everything about them to be true which is neither absurd, immoral, nor unsupported by the same amount of evidence which he would require for any other historic fact. And, just because this very

tone of mind—enthusiastic but not idolatrous, discriminating but not captious—runs through Mrs. Jameson's work, we hail it with especial pleasure, as a fresh move in a truly philosophic and Christian direction. Indeed, for that branch of the subject which she has taken in hand, not the history, but the poetry of legends and of the art which they awakened, she derives a peculiar fitness, not merely from her own literary talents and acquaintance with continental art, but also from the very fact of her being an English wife and mother. Women ought, perhaps, always to make the best critics—at once more quicksighted, more tasteful, more sympathetic than ourselves, whose proper business is creation. Perhaps in Utopia they will take the reviewer's business entirely off our hands, as they are said to be doing already, by the bye, in one leading periodical. But of all critics an English matron ought to be the best—open as she should be, by her womanhood, to all tender and admiring sympathies, accustomed by her Protestant education to unsullied purity of thought, and inheriting from her race, not only freedom of mind and reverence for antiquity, but the far higher birthright of English honesty.

And such a genial and honest spirit, we think, runs through this book.

Another difficult task, perhaps the most difficult of all, the authoress has well performed. We mean the handling of stories whose facts she partly or wholly disbelieves, while she admires and loves their spirit and moral; or doctrines, to pronounce on whose truth or falsehood is beyond her subject. This difficulty Mr. Newman, in the 'Lives of the English Saints,' edited and partly written by him, turned with wonderful astuteness to the advantage of Romanism; but others, more honest, have not been so victorious. Witness the

painfully uncertain impression left by some parts of one or two of those masterly articles on Romish heroes which appeared in the 'Quarterly Review;' an uncertainty which we have the fullest reason to believe was most foreign to the reviewer's mind and conscience. Even Mr. Macaulay's brilliant history here and there falls into the same snare. No one but those who have tried it can be aware of the extreme difficulty of preventing the dramatic historian from degenerating into an apologist or heating into a sneerer; or understand the ease with which an earnest author, in a case like the present, becomes frantically reckless, under the certainty that, say what he will, he will be called a Jesuit by the Protestants, an Infidel by the Papists, a Pantheist by the Ultra-High-Church, and a Rogue by all three.

Now, we certainly shall not say that Mrs. Jameson is greater than the writers just mentioned; but we must say, that female tact and deep devotional feeling cut the Gordian knot which has puzzled more cunning heads. Not that Mrs. Jameson is faultless; we want something yet, in the telling of a Christian fairy-tale, and know not what we want: but never were legends narrated with more discernment and simplicity than these.

As an instance, take the legend of St. Dorothea (vol. ii. p. 184), which is especially one of those stories of 'sainted personages who,' as Mrs. Jameson says, 'lived, or are supposed to have lived, in the first ages of Christianity; and whose real history, founded on fact or tradition, has been so disguised by poetical embroidery, that they have in some sort the air of ideal beings;' and which may, therefore, be taken as a complete test of the authoress's tact and honesty:—

In the province of Cappadocia and in the city of Cæsarea, dwelt a noble virgin, whose name was Dorothea. In the whole city there

was none to be compared to her in beauty and grace of person. She was a Christian, and served God day and night with prayers, with fasting, and with alms.

The governor of the city, by name Sapritius (or Fabricius), was a very terrible persecutor of the Christians, and hearing of the maiden, and of her great beauty, he ordered her to be brought before him. She came, with her mantle folded on her bosom, and her eyes meekly cast down. The governor asked, 'Who art thou?' and she replied, 'I am Dorothea, a virgin, and a servant of Jesus Christ.' He said, 'Thou must serve our gods, or die.' She answered mildly, 'Be it so; the sooner shall I stand in the presence of Him whom I most desire to behold.' Then the governor asked her, 'Whom meanest thou?' She replied, 'I mean the Son of God, Christ, mine espoused! his dwelling is paradise; by his side are joys eternal; and in his garden grow celestial fruits and roses that never fade.' Then Sapritius, overcome by her eloquence and beauty, ordered her to be carried back to her dungeon. And he sent to her two sisters, whose names were Calista and Christeta, who had once been Christians, but who, from terror of the torments with which they were threatened, had renounced their faith in Christ. To these women the governor promised large rewards if they would induce Dorothea to follow their evil example; and they, nothing doubting of success, boldly undertook the task. The result, however, was far different; for Dorothea, full of courage and constancy, reproved them as one having authority, and drew such a picture of the joys they had forfeited through their falsehood and cowardice, that they fell at her feet, saying, 'O blessed Dorothea, pray for us, that, through thy intercession, our sins may be forgiven and our penitence accepted!' And she did so. And when they had left the dungeon they proclaimed aloud that they were servants of Christ.

Then the governor, furious, commanded that they should be burned, and that Dorothea should witness their torments. And she stood by, bravely encouraging them, and saying, 'O my sisters, fear not! suffer to the end! for these transient pangs shall be followed by the joys of eternal life!' Thus they died: and Dorothea herself was condemned to be tortured cruelly, and then beheaded. The first part of her sentence she endured with invincible fortitude. She was then led forth to death; and, as she went, a young man, a lawyer of the city, named Theophilus, who had been present when she was first brought before the governor, called to her mockingly, 'Ha! fair maiden, goest thou to join thy bridegroom? Send me, I pray thee, of the fruits and flowers of that same garden of which thou hast spoken: I would fain taste of them!' And Dorothea, looking on him, inclined her head with a gentle smile, and said, 'Thy request, O Theophilus, is granted!' Whereat he laughed aloud with his companions; but she went on cheerfully to death.

When she came to the place of execution, she knelt down and prayed; and suddenly appeared at her side a beautiful boy, with hair bright as sunbeams—

'A smooth-faced, glorious thing,
With thousand blessings dancing in his eyes.'

In his hand he held a basket containing three apples, and three fresh-gathered and fragrant roses. She said to him, 'Carry these to Theophilus; say that Dorothea hath sent them, and that I go before him to the garden whence they came, and await him there.' With these words she bent her neck, and received the death-stroke.

Meantime the angel (for it was an angel) went to seek Theophilus, and found him still laughing in merry mood over the idea of the promised gift. The angel placed before him the basket of celestial fruit and flowers, saying, 'Dorothea sends thee this,' and vanished. What words can express the wonder of Theophilus? Struck by the prodigy operated in his favour, his heart melted within him; he tasted of the celestial fruit, and a new life was his; he proclaimed himself a servant of Christ, and, following the example of Dorothea, suffered with like constancy in the cause of truth, and obtained the crown of martyrdom.

We have chosen this legend just because it is in itself as superstitious and fantastic as any in the book. We happen to hold the dream of 'The Spiritual Marriage,' as there set forth, in especial abhorrence, and we have no doubt Mrs. Jameson does so also. We are well aware of the pernicious effect which this doctrine has exercised on matrimonial purity among the southern nations; that by making chastity synonymous with celibacy, it degraded married faithfulness into a restriction which there were penalties for breaking, but no rewards for keeping. We see clearly enough the cowardice, the shortsightedness, of fancying that man can ensure the safety of his soul by fleeing from the world;—in plain English, deserting the post to which God has called him, like the monks and nuns of old. We believe that the numbers of the early martyrs have been exaggerated. We believe that they were like ourselves, imperfect and inconsistent human beings; that, on the showing of the legends and fathers themselves, their testimony for the truth was too often impaired by superstition, fanaticism, or passion. But granting all this, we must still say, in the words of one

who cannot be suspected of Romanizing, the great Dr. Arnold:—

> Divide the sum total of reported martyrs by twenty; by fifty, if you will; after all, you have a number of persons of all ages and sexes suffering cruel torments and deaths for conscience sake, and for Christ's; and by their sufferings, manifestly with God's blessing, ensuring the triumph of Christ's Gospel. Neither do I think that we consider the excellence of this martyr spirit half enough.

Indeed we do not. Let all the abatements mentioned above, and more, be granted; yet, even then, when we remember that the world from which Jerome or Anthony fled was even worse than that denounced by Juvenal and Persius,—that the nuptials which, as legends say, were often offered the virgin martyrs as alternatives for death, were such as employed the foul pens of Petronius and Martial,—that the tyrants whom they spurned were such as live in the pages of Suetonius, and the Augustæ Historiæ Scriptores,—that the gods whom they were commanded to worship, the rites in which they were to join, were those over which Ovid and Apuleius had gloated, which Lucian had held up to the contempt of heathendom itself—that the tortures which they preferred to apostacy and to foul crimes were, by the confessions of the heathens themselves, too horrible for pen to tell,—it does raise a flush of indignation to hear some sleek bigot-sceptic, bred up in the safety and luxury of modern England, among Habeas Corpus Acts and endowed churches, trying from his warm fireside to sneer away the awful responsibilities and the heroic fortitude of valiant men and tender girls, to whose piety and courage he owes the very enlightenment, the very civilization, of which he boasts.

It is an error, doubtless, and a fearful one, to worship even such as them. But the error, when it arose, was at worst the caricature of a blessed truth. Even for the sinful, surely it was better to admire holiness

than to worship their own sin. Shame on those who, calling themselves Christians, repine that a Cecilia or a Magdalen replaced an Isis and a Venus; or who can fancy that they are serving Protestantism by tracing malevolent likenesses between even the idolatry of a saint and the idolatry of a devil! True, there was idolatry in both, as gross in one as the other. And what wonder? What wonder if, amid a world of courtesans, the nun was worshipped? At least God allowed it; and will man be wiser than God? 'The times of that ignorance He winked at.' The lie that was in it He did not interfere to punish. He did more; He let it work out, as all lies will, their own punishment. We may see that in the miserable century which preceded the glorious Reformation; we may see it in the present state of Spain and Italy. The crust of lies, we say, punished itself; to the germ of truth within it we partly owe that we are Christian men this day.

But granting, or rather boldly asserting all this, and smiling as much as we choose at the tale of St. Dorothea's celestial basket, is it not absolutely, and in spite of all, an exquisite story? Is it likely to make people better or worse? We might believe the whole of it, and yet we need not, therefore, turn idolaters and worship sweet Dorothea for a goddess. But if, as we trust in God is the case, we are too wise to believe it all—if even we see no reason (and there is not much) for believing one single word of it—yet still we ask, is it not an exquisite story? Is there not heroism in it greater than of all the Ajaxes and Achilles who ever blustered on this earth? Is there not power greater than of kings—God's strength made perfect in woman's weakness? Tender forgiveness, the Saviour's own likeness; glimpses, brilliant and true at the core, however dis-

torted and miscoloured, of that spiritual world where the wicked cease from troubling, where the meek alone shall inherit the earth, where, as Protestants too believe, all that is spotless and beautiful in nature as well as in man shall bloom for ever perfect?

It is especially in her descriptions of paintings that Mrs. Jameson's great talents are displayed. Nowhere do we recollect criticisms more genial, brilliant, picturesque than those which are scattered through these pages. Often they have deeper merits, and descend to those fundamental laws of beauty and of religion by which all Christian art must ultimately be tested. Mrs. Jameson has certainly a powerful inductive faculty; she comprehends at once the idea* and central law of a work of art, and sketches it in a few vivid and masterly touches; and really, to use a hack quotation honestly for once, 'in thoughts which breathe, and words which burn.' As an instance, we must be allowed to quote at length this charming passage on angel paintings, so valuable does it seem not only as

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* We are sorry to see, however, that Mrs. Jameson has been so far untrue to her own faculty as to join in the common mistake of naming Raphael's well-known cartoon at Hampton Court, 'Elymas the Sorcerer struck Blind.' On the supposition that this is its subject, its method of arrangement is quite unworthy of the rest, as the action would be split into the opposite corners of the picture, and the post of honour in the centre occupied by a figure of secondary importance; besides, the picture would lose its significance as one of this great series on 'Religious Conviction and Conversion.' But, strange to say, Raphael has all the while especially guarded against this very error, by labelling the picture with a description of its subject. Directly under the central figure is written, 'Sergius Paulus, Proconsul, embraces the Christian faith at the preaching of Paul.' Taking which simple hint, and looking at the face of the proconsul (himself a miracle of psychology) as the centre to which all is to be referred, the whole composition, down to the minutest details, arranges itself at once in that marvellous unity which is Raphael's especial glory.

information, but as a specimen of what criticism should be :—

On the revival of art, we find the Byzantine idea of angels everywhere prevailing. The angels in Cimabue's famous 'Virgin and Child enthroned,' are grand creatures, rather stern; but this arose, I think, from his inability to express beauty. The colossal angels at Assisi, solemn sceptred kingly forms, all alike in action and attitude, appeared to me magnificent.

In the angels of Giotto we see the commencement of a softer grace and a purer taste, farther developed by some of his scholars. Benozzo Gozzoli and Orcagna have left in the Campo Santo examples of the most graceful and fanciful treatment. Of Benozzo's angels in the Ricardi Palace I have spoken at length. His master, Angelico (worthy the name!), never reached the same power of expressing the rapturous rejoicing of celestial beings, but his conception of the angelic nature remains unapproached, unapproachable; it is only his, for it was the gentle, passionless, refined nature of the recluse which stamped itself there. Angelico's angels are unearthly, not so much in form as in sentiment; and super-human, not in power but in purity. In other hands, any imitation of his soft ethereal grace would become feeble and insipid. With their long robes falling round their feet, and drooping many-coloured wings, they seem not to fly or to walk, but to float along, 'smooth sliding without step.' Blessed, blessed creatures! love us, only love us; for we dare not task your soft, serene beatitude, by asking you to help us!

There is more sympathy with humanity in Francia's angels: they look as if they could weep, as well as love and sing.

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Correggio's angels are grand and lovely, but they are like children enlarged and sublimated, not like spirits taking the form of children; where they smile it is truly, as Annibal Caracci expresses it,—con una naturalezza et simplicità che innamora e sforza a ridere con loro; but the smile in many of Correggio's angel heads has something sublime and spiritual, as well as simple and natural.

And Titian's angels impress me in a similar manner—I mean those in the glorious Assumption at Venice—with their childish forms and features, but an expression caught from beholding the face of 'our Father that is in Heaven:' it is glorified infancy. I remember standing before this picture, contemplating those lovely spirits, one after another, until a thrill came over me like that which I felt when Mendelssohn played the organ,—I became music while I listened. The face of one of those angels is to the face of a child just what that of the Virgin in the same picture is compared with the fairest of the daughters of earth: it is not here superiority of beauty, but mind, and music, and love kneaded, as it were, into form and colour.

But Raphael, excelling in all things, is here excellent above all: his angels combine, in a higher degree than any other, the various

faculties and attributes in which the fancy loves to clothe these pure, immortal, beatified creatures. The angels of Giotto, of Benozzo, of Fiesole, are, if not female, feminine; those of Filippo Lippi, and of Andrea, masculine: but you cannot say of those of Raphael, that they are masculine or feminine. The idea of sex is wholly lost in the blending of power, intelligence, and grace. In his early pictures, grace is the predominant characteristic, as in the dancing and singing angels in his Coronation of the Virgin. In his later pictures the sentiment in his ministering angels is more spiritual, more dignified. As a perfect example of grand and poetical feeling, I may cite the angels as 'Regents of the Planets,' in the Capella Chigiana. The cupola represents in a circle the creation of the solar system, according to the theological and astronomical (or rather astrological) notions which then prevailed—a hundred years before 'the starry Galileo and his woes.' In the centre is the Creator; around, in eight compartments, we have, first, the angel of the celestial sphere, who seems to be listening to the divine mandate,—'Let there be light in the firmament of Heaven;' then follow, in their order, the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. The name of each planet is expressed by its mythological representative; the Sun by Apollo, the Moon by Diana: and over each presides a grand colossal winged spirit, seated or reclining on a portion of the zodiac as on a throne. I have selected two angels to give an idea of this peculiar and poetical treatment. The union of the theological and the mythological attributes is in the classical taste of the time, and quite Miltonic. In Raphael's child-angels, the expression of power and intelligence, as well as innocence, is quite wonderful; for instance, look at the two angel-boys in the Dresden Madonna di San Sisto, and the angels, or celestial genii, who bear along the Almighty when he appears to Noah. No one has expressed like Raphael the action of flight, except, perhaps, Rembrandt. The angel who descends to crown Santa Felicità cleaves the air with the action of a swallow; and the angel in Rembrandt's Tobit soars like a lark with upward motion, spurning the earth.

Michael Angelo rarely gave wings to his angels; I scarcely recollect an instance, except the angel in the Annunciation: and his exaggerated human forms, his colossal creatures, in which the idea of power is conveyed through attitude and muscular action, are, to my taste, worse than unpleasing. My admiration for this wonderful man is so profound that I can afford to say this. His angels are superhuman, but hardly angelic: and while in Raphael's angels we do not feel the want of wings, we feel while looking at those of Michael Angelo that not even the 'sail-broad vans' with which Satan laboured through the surging abyss of chaos could suffice to lift those Titanic forms from earth, and sustain them in mid-air. The group of angels over the Last Judgment, flinging their mighty limbs about, and those that surround the descending figure of Christ in the Conversion of St. Paul, may be referred to here as characteristic examples. The angels, blowing their trumpets, puff and strain like so

many troopers. Surely this is not angelic: there may be power, great, imaginative, and artistic power, exhibited in the conception of form, but in the beings themselves there is more of effort than of power: serenity, tranquillity, beatitude, ethereal purity, spiritual grace, are out of the question.

In this passage we may remark an excellence in Mrs. Jameson's mode of thought which has become lately somewhat rare. We mean a freedom from that bigoted and fantastic habit of mind which leads nowadays the worshippers of high art to exalt the early schools to the disadvantage of all others, and to talk as if Christian painting had expired with Perugino. We were much struck with our authoress's power of finding spiritual truth and beauty in Titian's 'Assumption,' one of the very pictures in which the 'high art' party are wont to see nothing but 'coarseness' and 'earthliness' of conception. She, having, we suppose, a more acute as well as a more healthy eye for the beautiful and the spiritual, and, therefore, able to perceive its slightest traces wherever they exist, sees in those 'earthly' faces of the great masters, 'an expression caught from beholding the face of our Father that is in Heaven.' The face of one of those 'angels,' she continues, 'is to the face of a child just what that of the Virgin in the same picture is compared with the fairest of the daughters of earth: it is not here superiority of beauty, but mind, and music, and love kneaded, as it were, into form and colour.'

Mrs. Jameson acknowledges her great obligations to M. Rio; and all students of art must be thankful to him for the taste, learning, and earnest religious feeling which he has expended on the history of the earlier schools of painting. An honest man, doubtless, he is; but it does not follow, alas! in this piecemeal world, that he should write an honest book. And his bigotry stands in painful contrast to the genial and

comprehensive spirit by which Mrs. Jameson seems able to appreciate the specific beauties of all schools and masters. M. Rio's theory (and he is the spokesman of a large party) is, unless we much misjudge him, this,—that the ante-Raffaellic is the only Christian art; and that all the excellences of these early painters came from their Romanism; all their faults from his two great bugbears,—Byzantinism and Paganism. In his eyes, the Byzantine idea of art was Manichean; in which we fully coincide, but add, that the idea of the early Italian painters was almost equally so: and that almost all in them that was not Manichean they owe not to their Romanism or their Asceticism, but to their healthy layman's common sense, and to the influence of that very classical art which they are said to have been pious enough to despise. Bigoted and ascetic Romanists have been, in all ages, in a hurry to call people Manicheans, all the more fiercely because their own consciences must have hinted to them that they were somewhat Manichean themselves. When a man suspects his own honesty, he is, of course, inclined to prove himself blameless by shouting the loudest against the dishonesty of others. Now M. Rio sees clearly and philosophically enough what is the root of Manicheanism,—the denial that that which is natural, beautiful, human, belongs to God. He imputes it justly to those Byzantine artists who fancied it carnal to attribute beauty to the Saviour or to the Virgin Mary, and tried to prove their own spirituality by representing their sacred personages in the extreme of ugliness and emaciation, though some of the specimens of their painting which Mrs. Jameson gives proves that this abhorrence of beauty was not so universal as M. Rio would have us believe. We agree with him that this absurdity was learned from them by earlier and

semi-barbarous Italian artists, that these latter rapidly escaped from it, and began rightly to embody their conceptions in beautiful forms; and yet we must urge against them, too, the charge of Manicheanism, and of a spiritual eclecticism also, far deeper and more pernicious than the mere outward eclecticism of manner which has drawn down hard names on the school of the Caracci.

For an eclectic, if it mean any thing, means this,—one who, in any branch of art or science, refuses to acknowledge Bacon's great law, 'That Nature is only conquered by obeying her;' who will not take a full and reverend view of the whole mass of facts with which he has to deal, and from them deducing the fundamental laws of his subject, obey them whithersoever they may lead; but who picks and chooses out of them just so many as may be pleasant to his private taste, and then constructs a partial system which differs from the essential ideas of Nature, in proportion to the number of facts which he has determined to discard. And such a course was pursued in art by the ascetic painters between the time of Giotto and Raffaelle. Their idea of beauty was a partial and a Manichean one; in their adoration for a fictitious 'angelic nature,' made up from all which is negative in humanity, they were prone to despise all by which man is brought in contact with this earth,—the beauties of sex, of strength, of activity, of grandeur of form; all, that is, in which Greek art excels: their ideal of beauty was altogether effeminate. They prudishly despised the anatomic study of the human figure, of landscape and chiaroscuro. Spiritual expression with them was everything; but it was only the expression of the passive spiritual faculties, of innocence, devotion, meekness, resignation; all good, but not the whole of humanity. Not that

they could be quite consistent in their theory. They were forced to paint their very angels as human beings; and a standard of human beauty they had to find somewhere; and they found one, strange to say, exactly like that of the old Pagan statues (wings and all—for the wings of Christian angels are copied exactly from those of Greek Genii), and only differing in that ascetic and emasculate tone, which was peculiar to themselves. Here is a dilemma which the worshippers of high art have slurred over. Where did Angelico da Fiesole get the idea of beauty which dictated his exquisite angels? We shall not, I suppose, agree with those who attribute it to direct inspiration, and speak of it as the reward of the prayer and fasting by which the good monk used to prepare himself for painting. Must we then confess that he borrowed his beauties from the faces of the prettiest nuns with whom he was acquainted? That would be sad naturalism; and sad eclecticism, too, considering that he must have seen among his Italian sisters a great many beauties of a very different type from that which he has chosen to copy; though, we suppose, of God's making equally with that of his favourites. Or did he, in spite of himself, steal a side-glance now and then at some of the unrivalled antique statues of his country, and copy on the sly any feature or proportion in them which was emasculate enough to be worked into his pictures? That, too, is likely enough; nay, it is certain. We are perfectly astonished how any draughtsman, at least how such a critic as M. Rio, can look at the early Italian painters without tracing everywhere in them the classic touch, the peculiar tendency to mathematic curves in the outlines, which is the distinctive peculiarity of Greek art. Is not Giotto, the father of Italian art, full of it in every line? Is not Perugino?

Is not the angel of Lorenzo Credi in Mrs. Jameson's woodcut? Is not Francia, except just where he is stiff, and soft, and clumsy? Is not Fra Angelico himself? Is it not just the absence of this Greek tendency to mathematical forms in the German painters before Albert Durer, which makes the specific difference, evident to every boy, between the drawing of the Teutonic and Italian schools?

But if so, what becomes of the theory which calls Pagan art by all manner of hard names? which dates the downfall of Christian art from the moment when painters first lent an eye to its pernicious seductions? How can those escape the charge of eclecticism, who, without going to the root-idea of Greek art, filched from its outside just as much as suited their purpose? And how, lastly, can M. Rio's school of critics escape the charge of Manichean contempt for God's world and man, not as ascetics have fancied him, but as God has made him, when they think it a sufficient condemnation of a picture to call it naturalistic; when they talk and act about art as if the domain of the beautiful were the devil's kingdom, from which some few species of form and elements were to be stolen by Christian painters, and twisted from their original evil destination into the service of religion?

On the other hand, we owe much to those early ascetic painters; their works are a possession for ever. No future school of religious art will be able to rise to eminence without taking full cognisance of them, and learning from them their secret. They taught artists, and priests, and laymen, too, that beauty is only worthy of admiration when it is the outward sacrament of the beauty of the soul within; they helped to deliver men from that idolatry to merely animal strength and loveliness into which they were in danger of falling in

ferocious ages, and among the relics of Roman luxury; they asserted the superiority of the spirit over the flesh; according to their light, they were faithful preachers of the great Christian truth, that devoted faith, and not fierce self-will, is man's glory. Well did their pictures tell to brutal peasant, and to still more brutal warrior, that God's might was best shewn forth, not in the elephantine pride of a Hercules, or the Titanic struggles of a Laocoon, but in the weakness of martyred women, and of warriors who were content meekly to endure shame and death, for the sake of Him who conquered by sufferings, and bore all human weaknesses; who 'was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and, like a sheep dumb before the shearer, opened not his mouth.'

We must conclude with a few words on one point on which we differ somewhat from Mrs. Jameson—the allegoric origin of certain legendary stories. She calls the story of the fiend, under the form of a dragon, devouring St. Margaret, and then bursting at the sign of the cross while the saint escaped unhurt, 'another form of the familiar allegory—the power of Sin overcome by the power of the Cross.'

And again, vol. ii. p. 4:—

> The legend of St. George came to us from the East; where, under various forms, as Apollo and the Python, as Bellerophon and the Chimæra, as Perseus and the Sea-monster, we see perpetually recurring the mythic allegory by which was figured the conquest achieved by beneficent Power over the tyranny of wickedness, and which reappears in Christian art in the legends of St. Michael and half a hundred other saints.

To us these stories seem to have had by no means an allegorical, but rather a strictly historic foundation; and our reasons for this opinion may possibly interest some readers.

Allegory, strictly so called, is the offspring of an advanced, and not of a semi-barbarous state of society.

Its home is in the East—not the East of barbarous Pontine countries peopled by men of our own race, where the legend of St. George is allowed to have sprung up, but of the civilized, metaphysical, dark-haired races of Egypt, Syria, and Hindostan. The 'objectivity' of the Gothic mind has never had any sympathy with it. The Teutonic races, like the earlier Greeks, before they were tinctured with Eastern thought, had always wanted historic facts, dates, names, and places. They even found it necessary to import their saints; to locate Mary Magdalene at Marseilles, Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury, the three Magi at Cologne, before they could thoroughly love or understand them. Englishmen especially cannot write allegories. John Bunyan alone succeeded tolerably, but only because his characters and language were such as he had encountered daily at every fireside and in every meeting-house. But Spenser wandered perpetually away, or rather, rose up from his plan into mere dramatic narrative. His work and other English allegories, are hardly allegoric at all, but rather symbolic; spiritual laws in them are not expressed by arbitrary ciphers, but embodied in imaginary examples, sufficiently startling or simple to form a plain key to other and deeper instances of the same law. They are analogous to those symbolic devotional pictures in which the Madonna and saints of all ages are grouped together with the painter's own contemporaries—no allegories at all, but the plain embodiment of a fact in which the artist believed; not only 'the communion of all saints,' but also their habit of assisting, often in visible form, the Christians of his own time.

These distinctions may seem over-subtle, but our meaning will surely be plain to any one who will compare 'The Faëry Queen,' or 'The Legend of St.

George,' with the Gnostic or Hindoo reveries, and the fantastic and truly Eastern interpretation of Scripture, which the European monks borrowed from Egypt. Our opinion is, that in the old legends the moral did not create the story, but the story the moral; and that the story had generally a nucleus of fact within all its distortions and exaggerations. This holds good of the Odinic and Grecian myths; all are now more or less inclined to believe that the deities of Zeus's or Odin's dynasties were real conquerors or civilizers of flesh and blood, like the Manco Capac of the Peruvians, and that it was around records of their real victories over barbarous aborigines, and over the brute powers of nature, that extravagant myths grew up, till more civilized generations began to say,—'These tales must have some meaning—they must be either allegorics or nonsense;' and then fancied that in the remaining thread of fact they found a clue to the mystic sense of the whole.

Such, we suspect, has been the history of St. George and the Dragon, as well as of Apollo and the Python. It is very hard to have to give up the dear old dragon who haunted our nursery dreams, especially when there is no reason for it. We have no patience with antiquaries who tell us that the dragons who guarded princesses were merely 'the winding walls or moats of their castles.' What use, then, pray, was there in the famous nether garment with which Regnar Lodbrog (shaggy-trousers) choked the dragon who guarded his lady-love? And Regnar was a real piece of flesh and blood, as King Ælla and our Saxon forefathers found to their cost: his awful death-dirge, and the effect which it produced, are well known to historians. We cannot give up Regnar's trousers, for we suspect the key to the whole dragon-question is in the pocket of them.

Seriously, Why should not these dragons have been simply what the Greek word dragon means—what the earliest romances, the Norse myths, and the superstitions of the peasantry in many parts of England to this day assert them to have been—'mighty worms,' huge snakes? All will agree that the Python, the representative in the old world of the 'Boa Constrictor' of the new, lingered in the Homeric age, if not later, both in Greece and in Italy. It existed on the opposite coast of Africa (where it is now extinct) in the time of Regulus; we believe, from the traditions of all nations, that it existed to a far later date in more remote and barbarous parts of Europe. There is every reason to suppose that it still lingered in England after the invasion of the Cymri—say not earlier than B.C. 600—for it was among them an object of worship; and we question whether they would have been likely to have adored a foreign animal, and, as at Abury, built enormous temples in imitation of its windings, and called them by its name.

The only answer to these traditions has as yet been, that no reptile of that bulk is known in cold climates. Yet the Python still lingers in the Hungarian marshes. A few years ago a huge snake, as large as the Pythons of Hindostan, spread havoc among the flocks and terror among the peasantry. Had it been Ariosto's 'Orc,' an à priori argument from science would have had weight. A marsupiate sea-monster is horribly unorthodox; and the dragon, too, has doubtless been made a monster of, but most unjustly; his legs have been patched on by crocodile-slaying crusaders, while his wings—where did they come from? From the traditions of 'flying serpents,' which have so strangely haunted the deserts of Upper Egypt from the time of the old Hebrew prophets, and which may not, after

all, be such lies as folk fancy. How scientific prigs shook with laughter at the notion of a flying dragon! till one day geology revealed to them, in the Pterodactylus, that a real flying dragon, on the model of Carlo Crivelli's in Mrs. Jameson's book, with wings before and legs behind, only more monstrous than that, and than all the dreams of Seba and Aldrovandus (though some of theirs, to be sure, have seven heads), got its living once on a time in this very island of England! But such is the way of this wise world! When Le Vaillant, in the last century, assured the Parisians that he had shot a giraffe at the Cape, he was politely informed that the giraffe was fabulous, extinct—in short, that he lied; and now, behold! the respectable old unicorn (and good Tories ought to rejoice to hear it) has been discovered at last by a German naturalist, Von Müller, in Abyssinia, just where our fathers told us to look for it! And why should we not find the flying serpent, too? The interior of Africa is as yet an unknown world of wonders; and we may yet discover there, for aught we know, the descendants of the very satyr who chatted with St. Anthony.

No doubt the discovery of huge fossil animals, as Mrs. Jameson says, on the high authority of Professor Owen, may have modified our ancestors' notions of dragons: but in the old serpent worship we believe the real explanation of these stories is to be found. There is no doubt that human victims, and even young maidens, were offered to these snake gods; even the sunny mythology of Greece retains horrible traces of such customs, which lingered in Arcadia, the mountain-fastness of the old and conquered race. Similar cruelties existed among the Mexicans; and there are but too many traces of it throughout the history of heathendom.

The same superstition may, as the legends assert, have lingered on, or been, at least, revived during the later ages of the empire, in remote provinces, left in their primæval barbarism, at the same time that they were brutalized by the fiendish exhibitions of the Circus, which the Roman governors found it their interest to introduce everywhere. Thus the serpent became naturally regarded as the manifestation of the evil spirit by Christians as well as by the old Hebrews; thus, also, it became the presiding genius of the malaria and fever which arose from the fens haunted by it—a superstition which gave rise to the theory that the tales of Hercules and the Hydra, Apollo and the mud-Python, St. George and the Dragon, were sanitary-reform allegories, and the monsters whose poisonous breath destroyed cattle and young maidens only typhus and consumption. We see no reason why early Christian heroes should not have actually met with such snake gods, and felt themselves bound, like Southey's Madoc, or Daniel in the old rabbinical story, whose truth has never been disproved, to destroy the monsters at all risk. We see no reason, either, why their righteous daring may not have been crowned with victory; and suspect that on such events were gradually built up the dragon-slaying legends which charmed all Europe, and grew in extravagances and absurdities, till they began to degenerate into the bombast of the 'Seven Champions,' and expired in the immortal ballad of the 'Dragon of Wantley,' in which More of More Hall, on the morning of his battle with the monster, invoked the saints no more, but

> To make him strong and mighty
> He drank by the tale
> Six pots of ale,
> And a quart of aqua-vitæ.

So ended the sublime sport of dragon-slaying. Its only remnant may now be seen in Borneo, whither that noble Christian man, Bishop Macdougall, took out the other day a six-chambered rifle, on the ground that 'while the alligators ate his school-children at Sarawak, it was his duty as a bishop to shoot the alligators.'

ALEXANDER SMITH AND ALEXANDER POPE.

ON reading this little book,* and considering all the exaggerated praise and exaggerated blame which have been lavished on it, we could not help falling into many thoughts about the history of English poetry for the last forty years, and about its future destiny. Great poets, even true poets, are becoming more and more rare among us. There are those even who say that we have none; an assertion which, as long as Mr. Tennyson lives, we shall take the liberty of denying. But were he, which Heaven forbid, taken from us, whom have we to succeed him? And he, too, is rather a poet of the sunset than of the dawn —of the autumn than of the spring. His gorgeousness is that of the solemn and fading year; not of its youth, full of hope, freshness, gay and unconscious life. Like some stately hollyhock or dahlia of this month's gardens, he endures while all other flowers are dying; but all around is winter—a mild one, perhaps, wherein a few annuals or pretty field weeds still linger on; but, like all mild winters, especially prolific in fungi, which, too, are not without their gaudiness, even their beauty, although bred only from the decay of higher organisms, the plagiarists of the vegetable world. Such is poetry in England; while in America the case is not much better. What more enormous scope for new poetic thought than that which the New World gives? Yet

* Fraser's Magazine, October, 1853.—'Poems,' by Alexander Smith. London: Bogue. 1853.

the American poets, even the best of them, look lingeringly and longingly back to Europe and her legends; to her models, and not to the best of them—to her criticism, and not to the best of that—and bestow but a very small portion of such genius as they have on America and her new forms of life. If they be nearer to the spring than we, they are still deep enough in the winter. A few early flowers may be budding among them, but the autumn crop is still in somewhat shabby and rain-bedrabbled bloom. And for us, where are our spring flowers? What sign of a new poetic school? Still more, what sign of the healthy resuscitation of any old one?

'What matter, after all?' one says to oneself in despair, re-echoing Mr. Carlyle. 'Man was not sent into the world to write poetry. What we want is truth. Of the former we have enough in all conscience just now. Let the latter need be provided for by honest and righteous history, and as for poets, let the dead bury their dead.' . . . . And yet, after all, man will write poetry, in spite of Mr. Carlyle: nay, beings who are not men, but mere forked radishes, will write it. Man is a poetry-writing animal. Perhaps he was meant to be one. At all events, he can no more be kept from it than from eating. It is better, with Mr. Carlyle's leave, to believe that the existence of poetry indicates some universal human hunger, whether after 'the beautiful,' or after 'fame,' or after the means of paying butchers' bills; and accepting it as a necessary evil which must be committed, to see that it be committed as well, or at least as little ill, as possible. In excuse of which we may quote Mr. Carlyle against himself, reminding him of a saying of Goethe once bepraised by

him in print,—'We must take care of the beautiful, for the useful will take care of itself.'

And never, certainly, since Pope wrote his Dunciad, did the beautiful require more taking care of, or evince less capacity for taking care of itself; and never, we must add, was less capacity for taking care of it evinced by its accredited guardians of the press than at this present time, if the reception given to Mr. Smith's poems is to be taken as a fair expression of 'the public taste.'

Now, let it be fairly understood, Mr. Alexander Smith is not the object of our reproaches: but Mr. Alexander Smith's models and flatterers. Against him we have nothing whatsoever to say; for him, very much indeed.

Very young, as is said, self-educated, drudging for his daily bread in some dreary Glasgow prison-house of brick and mortar, he has seen the sky, the sun and moon—and, moreover, the sea, report says, for one day in his whole life; and this is nearly the whole of his experience in natural objects. And he has felt, too painfully for his peace of mind, the contrast between his environment and that of others—his means of culture and that of others—and, still more painfully, the contrast between his environment and culture, and that sense of beauty and power of melody which he does not deny that he has found in himself, and which no one can deny who reads his poems fairly; who reads even merely the opening page and key-note of the whole:—

> For as a torrid sunset burns with gold
> Up to the zenith, fierce within my soul
> A passion burns from basement unto cope.
> Poesy, poesy, I'd give to thee
> As passionately my rich laden years,

My bubble pleasures, and my awful joys,
As Hero gave her trembling sighs to find
Delicious death on wet Leander's lip.
Bare, bold, and tawdry, as a fingered moth
Is my poor life; but with one smile thou canst
Clothe me with kingdoms. Wilt thou smile on me?
Wilt bid me die for thee? Oh, fair and cold!
As well may some wild maiden waste her love
Upon the calm front of a marble Jove.

Now this scrap is by no means a fair average specimen of Mr. Smith's verse. But is not the self-educated man who could teach himself, amid Glasgow smoke and noise, to write such a distich as that exquisite one which we have given in italics, to be judged lovingly and hopefully?

What if he has often copied? What if, in this very scrap, chosen almost at random, there should be a touch from Tennyson's 'Two Voices?' And what if imitations, nay, caricatures, be found in almost every page? Is not the explanation simple enough, and rather creditable than discreditable to Mr. Smith? He takes as his models Shelley, Keats, and their followers. Who is to blame for that? The Glasgow youth, or the public taste, which has been exalting these authors more and more for the last twenty years as the great poets of the nineteenth century? If they are the proper ideals of the day, who will blame him for following them as closely as possible—for saturating his memory so thoroughly with their words and thoughts that he reproduces them unconsciously to himself? Who will blame him for even consciously copying their images, if they have said better than he the thing which he wants to say, in the only poetical dialect which he knows? He does no more than all schools have done, copy their own masters; as the Greek epicists and Virgil copied Homer; as all succeeding Latin epicists copied Virgil; as Italians copied

Ariosto and Tasso; as every one who can copies Shakspeare; as the French school copied, or thought they copied, 'The Classics,' and as a matter of duty used to justify any bold image in their notes, not by its originality, but by its being already in Claudian, or Lucan, or Virgil, or Ovid; as every poetaster, and a great many who were more than poetasters, twenty years ago, used to copy Scott and Byron, and as all poetasters now are copying the very same models as Mr. Smith, and failing while he succeeds.

We by no means agree in the modern outcry for 'originality.' Is it absolutely demanded that no poet shall say anything whatsoever that any other poet has said? If so, Mr. Smith may well submit to a blame, which he will bear in common with Shakspeare, Chaucer, Pope, and many another great name; and especially with Raphael himself, who made no scruple of adopting not merely points of style, but single motives and incidents, from contemporaries and predecessors. Who can look at any of his earlier pictures, the Crucifixion for instance, at present in Lord Ward's gallery at the Egyptian Hall, without seeing that he has not merely felt the influence of Perugino, but copied him; tried deliberately to be as like his master as he could? Was this plagiarism? If so, all education, it would seem, must be a mere training in plagiarism. For how is the student to learn, except by copying his master's models? Is the young painter or sculptor a plagiarist because he spends the first, often the best, years of his life in copying Greek statues; or the school-boy, for toiling at the reproduction of Latin metres and images, in what are honestly and fittingly called 'copies' of verses? And what if the young artist shall choose, as Mr. Smith has done, to put a few drawings into the exhibition, or to carve and sell a few statuettes? What

if the school-boy, grown into a gownsman, shall contribute his share to a set of 'Arundines Cami' or 'Prolusiones Etonienses'? Will any one who really knows what art or education mean complain of them for having imitated their models, however servilely? Will he not rather hail such an imitation as a fair proof, first of the student's reverence for authority—a more important element of 'genius' than most young folks fancy—and next, of his possessing any artistic power whatsoever? For, surely, if the greater contains the less, the power of creating must contain that of imitating. A young author's power of accurate imitation is, after all, the primary and indispensable test of his having even the capability of becoming a poet. He who cannot write in a style which he does know, will certainly not be able to invent a new style for himself. The first and simplest form in which any metrical ear, or fancy, or imagination, can show itself, must needs be in imitating existing models. Innate good taste—that is, true poetic genius—will of course choose the best models in the long run. But not necessarily at first. What shall be the student's earliest ideal must needs be determined for him by circumstance, by the books to which he has access, by the public opinion which he hears expressed. Enough if he chooses, as Raphael did, the best models which he knows, and tries to exhaust them, and learn all he can from them, ready to quit them hereafter when he comes across better ones, yet without throwing away what he has learnt. 'Be faithful in a few things, and thou shalt become ruler over many things,' is one of those eternal moral laws which, like many others, holds as true of art as it does of virtue.

And on the whole, judging Mr. Alexander Smith by this rule, he has been faithful over a few things, and

therefore we have fair hope of him for the future. For Mr. Smith does succeed, not in copying one poet, but in copying all, and very often in improving on his models. Of the many conceits which he has borrowed from Mr. Bailey, there is hardly one which he has not made more true, more pointed and more sweet; nay, in or two places, he has dared to mend John Keats himself. But his whole merit is by no means confined to the faculty of imitation. Though the 'Life Drama' itself is the merest cento of reflections and images, without coherence or organization, dramatic or logical, yet single scenes, like that with the peasant and that with the fallen outcast, have firm self-consistency and clearness of conception; and these, as a natural consequence, are comparatively free from those tawdry spangles which deface the greater part of the poem. And, moreover, in the episode of 'The Indian and the Lady,' there is throughout a 'keeping in the tone,' as painters say, sultry and languid, yet rich and full of life, like a gorgeous Venetian picture, which augurs even better for Mr. Smith's future success than the two scenes just mentioned; for consistency of thought may come with time and training; but clearness of inward vision, the faculty of imagination, can be no more learnt than it can be dispensed with. In this, and this only, it is true that poeta nascitur non fit; just as no musical learning or practice can make a composer, unless he first possess an innate ear for harmony and melody. And it must be said that it is just in the passages where Mr. Smith is not copying, where he forgets for awhile Shelley, Keats, and the rest, and is content to be simply himself, that he is best; terse, vivid, sound, manly, simple. May he turn round some day, and deliberately pulling out all borrowed feathers, look at himself honestly and boldly in the glass, and we will

warrant him, on the strength of the least gaudy, and as yet unpraised passages in his poems, that he will find himself after all more eagle than daw, and quite well plumed enough by nature to fly at a higher, because for him a more natural, pitch than he has yet done.

True, he has written a great deal of nonsense; nonsense in matter as well as in manner. But therein, too, he has only followed the reigning school. . . . As for manner, he does sometimes, in imitating his models, out-Herod Herod. But why not? If Herod be a worthy king, let him be by all means out-Heroded, if any man can do it. One cannot have too much of a good thing. If it be right to bedizen verses with metaphors and similes which have no reference, either in tone or in subject, to the matter in hand, let there be as many of them as possible. If a saddle is a proper place for jewels, then let the seat be paved with diamonds and emeralds, and Runjeet Singh's harness-maker be considered as a lofty artist, for whose barbaric splendour Mr. Peat and his Melton customers are to forswear pigskin and severe simplicity—not to say utility and comfort. If poetic diction be different in species from plain English, then let us have it as poetical as possible, and as unlike English; as ungrammatical, abrupt, involved, transposed, as the clumsiness, carelessness, or caprice of man can make it. If it be correct to express human thought by writing whole pages of vague and bald abstract metaphysic, and then trying to explain them by concrete concetti, which bear an entirely accidental and mystical likeness to the notion which they are to illustrate, then let the metaphysic be as abstract as possible, the concetti as fanciful and far-fetched as possible. If Marino and Cowley be greater poets than Ariosto and Milton, let young poets imitate the former with might and main, and avoid

spoiling their style by any perusal of the too-intelligible common sense of the latter. If Byron's moral (which used to be thought execrable) be really his great excellence, and his style (which used to be thought almost perfect) unworthy of this age of progress, then let us have his moral without his style, his matter without his form; or—that we may be sure of never falling for a moment into his besetting sins of terseness, grace, and completeness—without any form at all. If poetry, in order to be worthy of the nineteenth century, ought to be as unlike as possible to Homer or Sophocles, Virgil or Horace, Shakspeare or Spenser, Dante or Tasso, let those too idolized names be rased henceforth from the Calendar; let the Ars Poetica be consigned to flames by Mr. Calcraft, and Martinus Scriblerus's Art of Sinking placed forthwith on the list of the Committee of Council for Education, that not a working man in England may be ignorant that, whatsoever superstitions about art may have haunted the benighted heathens who built the Parthenon, nous avons changés tout cela. In one word, if it be best and most fitting to write poetry in the style in which almost every one has been trying to write it since Pope and plain sense went out, and Shelley and the seventh heaven came in, let it be so written; and let him who most perfectly so 'sets the age to music,' be presented by the assembled guild of critics, not with the obsolete and too classic laurel, but with an electro-plated brass medal, bearing the due inscription, 'Ars est nescire artem.' And when, in twelvemonths' time, he finds himself forgotten, perhaps decried, for the sake of the next aspirant, let him reconsider himself, try whether, after all, the common sense of the many will not prove a juster and a firmer standing-ground than the sentimentality and bad taste of the few, and read Alexander Pope.

In Pope's writings, whatsoever he may not find, he will find the very excellences after which our young poets strive in vain, produced by their seeming opposites, which are now despised and discarded; naturalness produced by studious art; sublimity by strict self-restraint: depth by clear simplicity; pathos by easy grace; and a morality infinitely more merciful, as well as more righteous, than the one now in vogue among the poetasters, by honest faith in God. If he be shocked by certain peculiarities of diction, and by the fondness for perpetual antitheses, let him remember, that what seems strange to our day was natural and habitual in his; and that, in the eyes of our grandchildren, Keats's and Shelley's peculiarities will seem as monstrous as Pope's or Johnson's do in ours. But if, misled by the popular contempt for Pope, he should be inclined to answer this advice with a shrug and a smile, we entreat him, and all young poets, to consider, line by line, word by word, sound by sound, only those once well-known lines, which many a brave and wise man of fifty years ago would have been unable to read without honourable tears:—

> In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
> The floor of plaister, and the walls of dung,
> On once a flock-bed, but repaired with straw,
> With tape-tyed curtains, never meant to draw,
> The 'George and Garter,' dangling from that bed,
> Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
> Great Villiers lies. Alas! how changed from him,
> That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim?
> Gallant and gay, in Clieveden's proud alcove,
> The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
> Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring
> Of mimic statesmen, and their merry king.
> No wit to flatter, left of all his store!
> No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.
> There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
> And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.

Yes; Pope knew, as well as Wordsworth and our

'Naturalisti,' that no physical fact was so mean or coarse as to be below the dignity of poetry—when in its right place. He could draw a pathos and sublimity out of the dirty inn chamber, such as Wordsworth never elicited from tubs and daffodils—because he could use them according to the rules of art, which are the rules of sound reason and of true taste.

The answer to all this is ready now-a-days. We are told that Pope could easily be great in what he attempted, because he never attempted any but small matters; easily self-restraining, because his paces were naturally so slow; above all, easily clear, because he is always shallow; easily full of faith in what he did believe, because he believed so very little. On the two former counts we may have something to say hereafter. On the two latter, we will say at once, that if it be argued, as it often is, that the reason of our modern poetical obscurity and vagueness lies in the greater depth of the questions which are now agitating thoughtful minds, we do utterly deny it. Human nature, human temptations, human problems, are radically the same in every age, by whatsoever outward difference of words they may seem distinguished. Where is deeper philosophic thought, true or false, exprest in verse, than in Dante, or in Spenser's two cantos of 'Mutabilities?' Yet if they are difficult to understand, their darkness is that of the deep blue sea. Vague they never are, obscure they never are; because they see clearly what they want to say, and how to say it. There is always a sound and coherent meaning in them, to be found if it be searched for.

The real cause of this modern vagueness is rather to be found in shallow and unsound culture, and in that inability, or carelessness about seeing any object clearly, which besets our poets just now; as the cause

of antique clearness lies in the nobler and healthier manhood, in the severer and more methodic habits of thought, the sounder philosophic and critical training, which enabled Spenser and Milton to draw up a state paper, or to discourse deep metaphysics, with the same manful possession of their subject which gives grace and completeness to the 'Penscroso' or the 'Epithalamion.' And if our poets have their doubts, they should remember, that those to whom doubt and inquiry are real and stern, are not inclined to sing about them till they can sing poems of triumph over them. There has no temptation taken our modern poets save that which is common to man—the temptation of wishing to make the laws of the universe and of art fit them, as they do not feel inclined to make themselves fit the laws, or care to find them out.

What? Do you wish, asks some one, a little contemptuously, to measure the great growing nineteenth century by the thumb-rule of Alexander Pope? No. But to measure the men who write in the nineteenth century by a man who wrote in the eighteenth; to compare their advantages with his, their circumstances with his; and then, if possible, to make them ashamed of their unmanliness. Have you young poets of this day, your struggles, your chagrins? Do you think the hump-backed dwarf, every moment conscious at once of his deformity and his genius—conscious, probably, of far worse physical shame than any deformity can bring, 'sewed up in buckram every morning, and requiring a nurse like a child'—caricatured, lampooned, slandered, utterly without fault of his own—insulted and rejected by the fine lady whom he had dared to court in reality, after being allowed and allured to flirt with her in rhyme—do you suppose that this man had nothing to madden him?—to convert him into a sneering, snarling misanthrope? Yet was there one

noble soul who met him who did not love him, or whom he did not love? Have you your doubts? Do you find it difficult to make your own speculations, even your own honest convictions, square with the popular superstitions? What were your doubts, your inward contradictions, to those of a man who, bred a Papist, and yet burning with the most intense scorn and hatred of lies and shams, bigotries and priestcrafts, could write that 'Essay on Man? Read that, young gentlemen of the Job's-wife school, who fancy it a fine thing to tell your readers to curse God and die, or, at least to show the world in print how you could curse God by divine right of genius, if you chose, and be ashamed of your cowardly wailings.

Alexander Pope went through doubt, contradiction, confusion, to which yours are simple and light; and conquered. He was a man of like passions with yourselves; infected with the peculiar vices of his day; narrow, for his age was narrow; shallow, for his age was shallow; a bon-vivant, for his age was a gluttonous and drunken one; bitter, furious, and personal, for men round him were such; foul-mouthed often, and indecent, as the rest were. Nay, his very power, when he abuses it for his own ends of selfish spite and injured vanity, makes him, as all great men can be (in words at least, for in life he was far better than the men around him), worse than his age. He can outrival Dennis in ferocity, and Congreve in filth. So much the worse for him in that account which he has long ago rendered up. But in all times and places, as far as we can judge, the man was heart-whole, more and not less righteous then his fellows. With his whole soul he hates what is evil, as far as he can recognise it. With his whole soul he loves what is good, as far as he can recognise that. With his soul believes that there is a righteous and good God, whose order

no human folly or crime can destroy; and he will say so; and does say it, clearly, simply, valiantly, reverently, in that 'Essay on Man.' His theodicy is narrow; shallow, as was the philosophy of his age. But as far as it goes, it is sound—faithful to God, and to what he sees and knows. Man is made in God's image. Man's justice is God's justice; man's mercy is God's mercy; man's science, man's critic taste, are insights into the laws of God himself. He does not pretend to solve the great problem. But he believes that it is solved from all eternity; that God knows, God loves, and God rules; that the righteous and faithful man may know enough of the solution to know his duty, to see his way, to justify God; and as much as he knows he tells. There were in that diseased, sensitive cripple no vain repinings, no moon-struck howls, no impious cries against God. 'Why hast thou made me thus?' To him God is a righteous God, a God of order. Science, philosophy, politics, criticism, poetry, are parts of His order—they are parts of the appointed onward path for mankind; there are eternal laws for them. There is a beautiful and fit order, in poetry, which is part of God's order, which men have learnt ages ago, for they, too, had their teaching from above; to offend against which is absolutely wrong, an offence to be put down mildly in those who offend ignorantly: but those who offend from dulness, from the incapacity to see the beautiful, or from carelessness about it, when praise or gain tempt them the other way, have some moral defect in them; they are what Solomon calls fools; they are the enemies of man; and he will 'hate them right sore, even as though they were his own enemies'—which indeed they were. He knows by painful experience that they deserve no quarter: that there is no use giving them any; to spare them is to make them insolent; to fondle the reptile is to

be bitten by it. True poetry, as the messenger of heavenly beauty, is decaying; true refinement, true loftiness of thought, even true morality, are at stake. And so he writes his 'Dunciad.' . . . . And would that he were here, to write it over again, and write it better!

For write it again he surely would. And write it better he would also. With the greater cleanliness of our time, with all the additional experience of history, with the greater classical, æsthetic, and theological knowledge of our day, the sins of our poets are as much less excusable than those of Eusden, Blackmore, Cibber, and the rest, as Pope's 'Dunciad' on them would be more righteously severe. What, for instance, would the author of the 'Essay on Man' say to any one who now wrote p. 137 (for it really is not to be quoted) of the 'Life Drama' as the thoughts of his hero, without any after atonement for the wanton insult it conveys toward him whom he dares in the same breath to call 'Father,' simply because he wants to be something very fine and famous and self-glorifying, and Providence keeps him waiting awhile? . . . . Has Pope not said it already? . . . .

> Persist, by all divine in man unawed,
> But learn, ye dunces, not to scorn your God!

And yet no; the gentle goddess would now lay no such restriction on her children, for in Pope's day no man had discovered the new poetic plan for making the divine in man an excuse for scorning God, and finding in the dignity of 'heaven-born genius' free licence to upbraid, on the very slightest grounds, the Being from whom he said genius pretends to derive his dignity. In one of his immortal saws he has cautioned us against 'making God in man's image.' But it never entered into his simple head that man would complain of God for being made in a lower image than even his own.

Atheism he could conceive of; the deeper absurdity of Authotheism was left for our more enlightened times and more spiritual muses.

It will be answered that all this blasphemy is not to be attributed to the author, but to the man whose spiritual development he intends to sketch. To which we reply that no man has a right to bring his hero through such a state without showing how he came out of the slough as carefully as he came into it, especially when the said hero is set forth as a marvellously clever person; and the last scene, though full of beautiful womanly touches, and of a higher morality than the rest of the book, contains no amende honorable, not even an explanation of the abominable stuff which the hero has been talking a few pages back. He leaps from the abyss to the seventh heaven; but, unfortunately for the spectators, he leaps behind the scenes, and they are none the wiser. And next; people have no more right, even for dramatic purposes, to put such language into print for any purpose whatsoever, than they have to print the grossest indecencies, or the most disgusting details of torture and cruelty. No one can accuse this magazine of any fondness for sanctimonious cant or lip-reverence; but if there be a 'Father in Heaven,' as Mr. Smith confesses that there is, or even merely a personal Deity at all, some sort of common decency in speaking of Him should surely be preserved. No one would print pages of silly calumny and vulgar insult against his earthly father, or even against a person for whom he had no special dislike, and then excuse it by, 'Of course, I don't think so: but if any one did think so, this would be a very smart way of saying what he thought.' Old Aristotle would call such an act 'banauson;' in plain English, blackguard; and we do not see how it can be called anything

else, unless in the case of some utter brute in human form, to whom 'there is no cœnum, and therefore no obscœnum; no fanum, and therefore no profanum.' The common sense of mankind in all ages has condemned this sort of shamelessness, even more than it has insults to parental and social ties, and to all which raises man above the brute. Let Mr. Smith take note of this, and let him, if he loves himself, mend speedily; for of all styles wherein to become stereotyped the one which he has chosen is the worst, because in it the greatest amount of insincerity is possible. There is a Tartarus in front of him as well as an Olympus; a hideous possibility very near him of insincere impiety merely for the purpose of startling; of lawless fancy merely for the purpose of glittering; and a still more hideous possibility of a revulsion to insincere cant, combined with the same lawless fancy, for the purpose of keeping well with the public, in which to all appearances one of our most popular novelists, not to mention the poet whose writings are most analogous to Mr. Smith's, now lies wallowing.

Whether he shall hereafter obey his evil angel, and follow Mr. Bailey, or his good angel, and become a great poet, depends upon himself; and above all upon his having courage to be himself, and to forget himself, two virtues which, paradoxical as it may seem, are correlatives. For the 'subjective' poet—in plain words, the egotist—is always comparing himself with every man he meets, and therefore momentarily tempted to steal bits of their finery wherewith to patch his own rents; while the man who is content to be simply what God has made him, goes on from strength to strength developing almost unconsciously under a divine education, by which his real personality and the salient points by which he is distinguished from his fellows,

become apparent with more and more distinctness of form, and brilliance of light and shadow, as those well know who have watched human character attain its clearest and grandest as well as its loveliest outlines, not among hankerers after fame and power, but on lonely sickbeds, and during long unknown martyrdoms of humble self-sacrifice and loving drudgery.

But whether or not Mr. Smith shall purify himself —and he can do so, if he will, right nobly—the world must be purified of his style of poetry, if men are ever, as he hopes, to 'set this age to music;' much more if they are once more to stir the hearts of the many by Tyrtæan strains, such as may be needed before our hairs are grey. The 'poetry of doubt,' however pretty, would stand us in little stead if we were threatened with a second Armada. It will conduce little to the valour, 'virtus,' manhood of any Englishman to be informed by any poet, even in the most melodious verse, illustrated by the most startling and pancosmic metaphors, 'See what a highly-organized and peculiar stomach-ache I have had! Does it not prove indisputably that I am not as other men are?' What gospel there can be in such a message to any honest man who has either to till the earth, plan a railroad, colonize Australia, or fight his country's enemies, is hard to discover. Hard indeed to discover how this most practical, and therefore most poetical, of ages, is to be 'set to music,' when all those who talk about so doing persist obstinately in poring, with introverted eyes, over the state of their own digestion—or creed.

What man wants, what art wants, perhaps what the Maker of them both wants, is a poet who shall begin by confessing that he is as other men are, and sing about things which concern all men, in language which all men can understand. This is the only road to that

gift of prophecy which most young poets are now-a-day in such a hurry to arrogate to themselves. We can only tell what man will be by fair induction, by knowing what he is, what he has been.

And it is most noteworthy that in this age, in which there is more knowledge than there ever was of what man has been, and more knowledge, through innumerable novelists, and those most subtle and finished ones, of what man is, that poetry should so carefully avoid drawing from this fresh stock of information in her so-confident horoscopes of what man will be.

There is just now as wide a divorce between poetry and the common-sense of all time, as there is between poetry and modern knowledge. Our poets are not merely vague and confused, they are altogether fragmentary—disjecta membra poetarum; they need some uniting idea. And what idea?

Our answer will probably be greeted with a laugh. Nevertheless we answer simply, What our poets want is faith.

There is little or no faith now-a-days. And without faith there can be no real art, for art is the outward expression of firm, coherent belief. And a poetry of doubt, even a sceptical poetry, in its true sense, can never possess clear and sound form, even organic form at all. How can you put into form that thought which is by its very nature formless? How can you group words round a central idea when you do not possess a central idea? Shakspeare in his one sceptic tragedy has to desert the pure tragic form, and Hamlet remains the beau-ideal of 'the poetry of doubt.' But what would a tragedy be in which the actors were all Hamlets, or rather scraps of Hamlets? A drama of Hamlet is only possible because the one sceptic is surrounded by characters who have some positive faith, who do

their work for good or evil undoubtingly while he is speculating about his. And both Ophelia, and Laertes, Fortinbras, the king, yea the very grave-digger, know well enough what they want, whether Hamlet does or not. The whole play is, in fact, Shakspeare's subtle reductio ad adsurdum of that very diseased type of mind which has been for the last forty years identified with 'genius'—with one difference, namely, that Shakspeare, with his usual clearness of conception, exhibits the said intellectual type pure and simple, while modern poets degrade and confuse it, and all the questions dependent on it, by mixing it up unnecessarily with all manner of moral weaknesses, and very often moral crimes.

But the poet is to have a faith now-a-days of course —a 'faith in nature.' This article of Wordsworth's poetical creed is to be assumed as the only necessary one, and we are to ignore altogether the somewhat important fact that he had faith in a great deal besides nature, and to make that faith in nature his sole differentia and source of inspiration. Now we beg leave to express not merely our want of faith in this same 'faith in nature,' but even our ignorance of what it means. Nature is certain phenomena, appearances. Faith in them is simply to believe that a red thing is red, and a square thing square; a sine qua non doubtless in poetry, as in carpentry, but which will produce no poetry, but only Dutch painting and gardeners' catalogues—in a word, that lowest form of art, the merely descriptive; and into this very style the modern naturalist poets, from the times of Southey and Wordsworth, have been continually falling, and falling therefore into baldness and vulgarity. For mere description cannot represent even the outlines of a whole scene at once, as the daguerreotype does; they must describe it piecemeal. Much less can it represent that whole scene at once in

all its glories of colour, glow, fragrance, life, motion. In short it cannot give life and spirit. All merely descriptive poetry can do is to give a dead catalogue—to kill the butterfly, and then write a monograph on it. And, therefore, there comes a natural revulsion from the baldness and puerility into which Wordsworth too often fell by indulging his false theories on these matters.

But a revulsion to what? To the laws of course which underlie the phenomena. But again—to which laws? Not merely to the physical ones, else Turner's 'Chemistry' and Watson's 'Practice of Medicine' are great poems.

True, we have heard Professor Forbes's book on Glaciers called an epic poem, and not without reason: but what gives that noble book its epic character is neither the glaciers nor the laws of them, but the discovery of those laws; the methodic, truthful, valiant, patient battle between man and nature, his final victory, his wresting from her the secret which had been locked for ages in the ice-caves of the Alps, guarded by cold and fatigue, danger, and superstitious dread. For nature will be permanently interesting to the poet, and appear to him in a truly poetic aspect, only in as far as she is connected by him with spiritual and personal beings, and becomes in his eyes either a person herself, or the dwelling and organ of persons. The shortest scrap of word-painting, as Thomson's 'Seasons' will sufficiently prove, is wearisome and dead, unless there be a living figure in the landscape, or unless, failing a living figure, the scene is deliberately described with reference to the poet or the reader, not as something in itself, but as something seen by him, and grouped and subordinated exactly as it would strike his eye and mind. But even this is insufficient. The heart of

man demands more, and so arises a craving after the old nature-mythology of Greece, the old fairy legends of the Middle Age. The great poets of the Renaissance both in England and in Italy had a similar craving. But the aspect under which these ancient dreams are regarded by them is most significantly different. With Spenser and Ariosto, fairies and elves, gods and demons, are regarded in their fancied connexion with man. Even in the age of Pope, when the gods and the Rosicrucian Sylphs have become alike 'poetical machinery,' this is their work. But among the moderns it is as connected with nature, and giving a soul and a personality to her, that they are most valued. The most pure utterance of this feeling is perhaps Schiller's 'Gods of Greece,' where the loss of the Olympians is distinctly deplored, because it has unpeopled, not heaven, but earth. But the same tone runs through Goethe's classical 'Walpurgis Night,' where the old human 'twelve gods,' the anti-types and the friends of men, in whom our forefathers delighted, have vanished utterly, and given place to semi-physical Nereides, Tritons, Telchines, Psylli, and Seismos himself.

Keats, in his wonderful 'Endymion,' contrived to unite the two aspects of Greek mythology as they never had been united before, except by Spenser in his 'Garden of Adonis.' But the Pantheistic notion, as he himself says in 'Lamia,' was the one which lay nearest his heart; and in his 'Hyperion' he begins to deal wholly with the Nature gods, and after magnificent success, leaves the poem unfinished, most probably because he had become, as his readers must, weary of its utter want of human interest. For that, after all, is what is wanted in a poetical view of nature; and that is what the poet, in proportion to his want of dramatic faculty, must draw from himself. He

must—he does in these days—colour Nature with the records of his own mind, and bestow a factitious life and interest on her by making her reflect his own joy or sorrow. If he be out of humour, she must frown; if he sigh, she must roar; if he be—what he very seldom is—tolerably comfortable, the birds have liberty to sing, and the sun to shine. But by the time that he has arrived at this stage of his development, or degradation, the poet is hardly to be called a strong man. He who is so much the slave of his own moods that he must needs see no object save through them, is not very likely to be able to resist the awe which Nature's grandeur and inscrutability brings with it, and to say firmly, and yet reverently—

> Si fractus illabatur orbis,
> Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

He feels, in spite of his conceit, that Nature is not going his way, or looking his looks, but going what he calls her own way, what we call God's way. At all events, he feels that he is lying, when he represents the great universe as tuned to his small set of Pan's pipes, and all the more because he feels that, conceal it as he will, those same Pan's pipes are out of tune with each other. And so arises the habit of impersonating Nature, not after the manner of Spenser (whose purity of metaphor and philosophic method, when he deals with Nature, is generally even more marvellous than the richness of his fancy), as an organic whole, but in her single and accidental phenomena; and of ascribing not merely animal passions or animal enjoyment, but human discursive intellect and moral sense, to inanimate objects, and talking as if a stick or a stone were more of a man than the poet is—as indeed they very often may be.

These, like everything else, are perfectly right in

their own place—where they express passion, either pleasurable or painful, passion, that is, not so intense as to sink into exhaustion, or to be compelled to self-control by the fear of madness. In these two cases, as great dramatists know well enough, the very violence of the emotion produces perfect simplicity, as the hurricane blows the sea smooth: but where fanciful language is employed to express the extreme of passion, it is felt to be absurd, and is accordingly called rant and bombast; and where it is not used to express passion at all, but merely the quiet and normal state of the poet's mind, or of his characters, with regard to external nature; when it is considered, as it is by most of our modern poets, the staple of poetry, indeed poetic diction itself, so that the more numerous and the stranger conceits an author can cram into his verses, the finer poet he is; then, also, it is called rant and bombast, but of the most artificial, insincere, and (in every sense of the word) monstrous kind; the offspring of an effeminate Nature-worship, without self-respect, without true manhood, because it exhibits the poet as the puppet of his own momentary sensations, and not as a man superior to nature, claiming his likeness to the Author of nature, by confessing and expressing the permanent laws of nature, undisturbed by fleeting appearances without, or fleeting tempers within. Hence it is, that as in all insincere and effete times the poetry of the day deals more and more with conceits, and less and less with true metaphors. In fact, hinc illæ lachrymæ. This is, after all, the primary symptom of disease in the public taste, which has set us on writing this review—that critics all round are crying, 'An ill-constructed whole, no doubt; but full of beautiful passages'—the word 'passages' turning out to mean, in plain English, conceits. The simplest distinction, per-

haps, between an image and a conceit is this—that while both are analogies, the image is founded on an analogy between the essential properties of two things—the conceit on an analogy between its accidents. Images, therefore, whether metaphors or similes, deal with laws; conceits with private judgments. Images belong to the imagination, the power which sees things according to their real essence and inward life, and conceits to the fancy or phantasy, which only sees things as they appear.

To give an example or two from the 'Life Drama:'—

> His heart holds a dead hope,
> As holds the wretched west the sunset's corse—
> Spit on, insulted by the brutal rains.
>
> The passion-panting sea
> Watches the unveiled beauty of the stars
> Like a great hungry soul.
>
> Great spirits,
> Who left upon the mountain-tops of Death
> A light that made them lovely.
>
> The moon,
> Arising from dark waves which plucked at her.

And hundreds, nay, thousands more in this book, whereof it must be said, that beautiful or not, in the eyes of the present generation—and many of them are put into very beautiful language, and refer to very beautiful natural objects—they are not beautiful really and in themselves: because they are mere conceits; the analogies in them are fortuitous, depending not on the nature of the things themselves, but on the private fancy of the writer, having no more real and logical coherence than a conundrum or a pun; in plain English, untrue: only allowable to Juliets or Othellos, while their self-possession, almost their reason, is in temporary abeyance under the influence of joy or sorrow. Every one must feel the exquisite fitness of

Juliet's 'Gallop apace, ye fiery-footed steeds,' &c., for one of her character, in her circumstances: every one, we trust, and Mr. Smith among the number, will some day feel the exquisite unfitness of using such conceits as we have just quoted, or any other, page after page, for all characters and chances. For the West is not wretched; the rains never were brutal yet, and do not insult the sun's corpse, being some millions of miles nearer us than the sun, but only have happened once to seem to do so in the poet's eyes. The sea does not pant with passion, does not hunger after the beauty of the stars; Death has no mountain-tops, or any property which can be compared thereto; and 'the dark waves'—in that most beautiful conceit which follows, and which Mr. Smith has borrowed from Mr. Bailey, improving it marvellously nevertheless—do not 'pluck at the moon,' but only seem to do so. And what constitutes the beauty of this very conceit—far the best of those we have chosen—but that it looks so very like an image, so very like a law, from being so very common and customary an ocular deception to one standing on a low shore at night?

Or, again, in a passage which has been already often quoted as exquisite, and in its way is so:—

> The bridegroom sea
> Is toying with the shore, his wedded bride;
> And in the fulness of his marriage joy
> He decorates her tawny brow with shells,
> Retires a pace, to see how fair she looks,
> Then proud, runs up to kiss her.

Exquisite? Yes; but only exquisitely pretty. It is untrue—a false explanation of the rush and recoil of the waves. We learn nothing by these lines; we gain no fresh analogy between the physical and the spiritual world, not even between two different parts of the

physical world. If the poetry of this age has a peculiar mission, it is to declare that such an analogy exists throughout the two worlds; then let poetry declare it. Let it set forth a real intercommunion between man and nature, grounded on a communion between man and God who made nature. Let it accept nature's laws as the laws of God. Truth, scientific truth, is the only real beauty. 'Let God be true, and every man a liar.'

Now, be it remembered that by far the greater proportion of this book consists of such thoughts as these; and that these are what are called its beauties; these are what young poets try more and more daily to invent—conceits, false analogies. Be it remembered, that the affectation of such conceits has always marked the decay and approaching death of a reigning school of poetry; that when, for instance, the primæval forest of the Elizabethan poets dwindled down into a barren scrub of Vaughans, and Cowleys, and Herberts, and Crashawes, this was the very form in which the deadly blight appeared. In vain did the poetasters, frightened now and then at their own nonsense, try to keep up the decaying dignity of poetry by drawing their conceits, as poetasters do now, from suns and galaxies, earthquakes, eclipses, and the portentous, and huge, and gaudy in nature; the lawlessness and irreverence for nature, involved in the very worship of conceits, went on degrading the tone of the conceits themselves, till the very sense of true beauty and fitness seemed lost; and a pious and refined gentleman like George Herbert could actually dare to indite solemn conundrums to the Supreme Being, and believe that he was writing devout poetry, and 'looking through nature up to nature's God,' when he delivered himself thus in one of his least offensive poems (for the most sacred and most offensive of them we dare not quote, lest we incur

the same blame which we have bestowed on Mr. Smith), and sing of Church festivals as—

> Marrow of time, eternity in brief,
> Compendiums epitomized, the chief
> Contents, the indices, the title-pages
> Of all past, present, and succeeding ages,
> Sublimate graces, antedated glories;
> The cream of holiness,
> The inventories
> Of future blessedness,
> The florilegia of celestial stories,
> Spirit of Joys, the relishes and closes
> Of angels' music, pearls dissolved, roses
> Perfumed, sugar'd honeycombs. . . .

That manner, happily for art, was silenced by the stern, truth-loving common sense of the Puritans. Whatsoever else, in their crusade against shams, they were too hasty in sweeping away, they were right, at least, in sweeping away such a sham as that. And now, when a school has betaken itself to use the very same method in the cause of blasphemy, instead of on that of cant, the Pope himself, with his Index Prohibitus, might be a welcome guest, if he would but stop the noise, and compel our doting Muses to sit awhile in silence, and reconsider themselves.

In the meanwhile, poets write about poets, and poetry, and guiding the age, and curbing the world, and waking it, and thrilling it, and making it start, and weep, and tremble, and self-conceit only knows what else; and yet the age is not guided, or the world curbed, or thrilled, or waked, or anything else, by them. Why should it be? Curb and thrill the world? The world is just now a most practical world: and these men are utterly unpractical. The age is given up to physical science: these men disregard and outrage it in every page by their false analogies. If they intend, as they say, to link heaven and earth by

preaching the analogy of matter and spirit, let them, in the name of common prudence, observe the laws of matter, about which the world does know something, and show their coincidence with the laws of spirit—if indeed they know anything about the said laws. Loose conceits, fancies of the private judgment, were excusable enough in the Elizabethan poets. In their day, nature was still unconquered by science; mediæval superstitions still lingered in the minds of men; and the magical notions of nature which they had inherited from the Middle Age received a corroboration from those Neo-Platonist dreamers, whom they confounded with the true Greek philosophers. But, now that Bacon has spoken, and that Europe has obeyed him, surely, among the most practical, common sense, and scientific nation of the earth, severely scientific imagery, imagery drawn from the inner laws of nature, is necessary to touch the hearts of men. They know that the universe is not such as poets paint it; they know that these pretty thoughts are only pretty thoughts, springing from the caprice, the vanity, very often from the indigestion of the gentlemen who take the trouble to sing to them; and they listen, as they would to a band of street musicians, and give them sixpence for their tune, and go on with their work. The tune outside has nothing to do with the work inside. It will not help them to be wiser, abler, more valiant—certainly not more cheerful and hopeful men, and therefore they care no more for it than they do for an opera or a pantomime, if as much. Whereupon the poets get disgusted with this same hard-hearted, prosaic world—which is trying to get its living like an industrious animal as it is—and demand homage—for what? For making a noise, pleasant or otherwise? For not being as other men are? For pleading 'the eccen-

tricities of genius' as an excuse for sitting like naughty children in the middle of the schoolroom floor, in everybody's way, shouting and playing on penny trumpets, and when begged to be quiet, that other people may learn their lessons, considering themselves insulted, and pleading 'genius'? Genius!—hapless by-word, which, like charity, covers now-a-days the multitude of sins, all the seven deadly ones included! Is there any form of human folly which one has not heard excused by 'he is a genius, you know—one must not judge him by common rules.' Poor genius—to have come to this! To be when confest, not a reason for being more of a man than others, but an excuse for being less of a man, less amenable than the herd to the common laws of humanity, and therefore less able than they to comprehend its common duties, common temptations, common sins, common virtues, common destinies. Of old the wise singer did by virtue of feeling with all, and obeying with all, learn to see for all, to see eternal laws, eternal analogies, eternal consequences, and so became a seer, vates, prophet; but now he is become a genius, a poetical pharisee, a reviler of common laws and duties, the slave of his own private judgment, who prophesies out of his own heart, and hath seen nothing but only the appearances of things distorted and coloured by 'genius.' Heaven send the word, with many more, a speedy burial!

And what becomes of artistic form in the hands of such a school? Just what was to be expected. It is impossible to give outward form to that which is in its very nature formless, like doubt and discontent. For on such subjects thought itself is not defined; it has no limit, no self-coherence, not even method or organic law. And in a poem, as in all else, the body must be formed according to the law of the inner life; the utter-

ance must be the expression, the outward and visible autotype, of the spirit which animates it. But where the thought is defined by no limits, it cannot express itself in form, for form is that which has limits. Where it has no inward unity it cannot have any outward one. If the spirit be impatient of all moral rule, its utterance will be equally impatient of all artistic rule; and thus, as we are now beginning to discover from experience, the poetry of doubt will find itself unable to use those forms of verse which have been always held to be the highest; tragedy, epic, the ballad, and lastly, even the subjective lyrical ode. For they, too, to judge by every great lyric which remains to us, require a groundwork of consistent, self-coherent belief; and they require also an appreciation of melody even more delicate, and a verbal polish even more complete than any other form of poetic utterance. But where there is no melody within, there will be no melody without. It is in vain to attempt the setting of spiritual discords to physical music. The mere practical patience and self-restraint requisite to work out rhythm when fixed on, will be wanting; nay, the fitting rhythm will never be found, the subject itself being arhythmic; and thus we shall have, or, rather, alas! do have, a wider and wider divorce of sound and sense, a greater and greater carelessness for polish, and for the charm of musical utterance, and watch the clear and spirit-stirring melodies of the older poets swept away by a deluge of half-metrical prose-run-mad, diffuse, unfinished, unmusical, to which any other metre than that in which it happens to have been written would have been equally appropriate, because all are equally inappropriate; and where men have nothing to sing, it is not of the slightest consequence how they sing it.

While poets persist in thinking and writing thus, it

is in vain for them to talk loud about the poet's divine mission, as the prophet of mankind, the swayer of the universe, and so forth. Not that we believe the poet simply by virtue of being a singer to have any such power. While young gentlemen are talking about governing heaven and earth by verse, Wellingtons and Peels, Arkwrights and Stephensons, Frys and Chisholms, are doing it by plain, practical prose; and even of those who have moved and led the hearts of men by verse, every one, as far as we know, has produced his magical effects by poetry of the very opposite form to that which is now in fashion. What poet ever had more influence than Homer? What poet is more utterly antipodal to our modern schools? There are certain Hebrew psalms, too, which will be confest, even by those who differ most from them, to have exercised some slight influence on human thought and action, and to be likely to exercise the same for some time to come. Are they any more like our modern poetic forms than they are like our modern poetic matter? Ay, even in our own time, what has been the form, what the temper, of all poetry, from Körner and Heine, which has made the German heart leap up, but simplicity, manhood, clearness, finished melody, the very opposite in a word of our new school? And to look at home, what is the modern poetry which lives on the lips and in the hearts of Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen? It is not only simple in form and language, but much of it fitted, by a severe exercise of artistic patience, to tunes already existing. Who does not remember how the 'Marseillaise' was born, or how Burns's 'Scots wha ha' wi' Wallace bled,' or the story of Moore's taking the old 'Red Fox March,' and giving it a new immortality as 'Let Erin remember the days of old,' while poor Emmett sprang up and cried, 'Oh,

that I had twenty thousand Irishmen marching to that tune!' So it is, even to this day, and let those who hanker after poetic fame take note of it; not a poem which is now really living but has gained its immortality by virtue of simplicity and positive faith.

Let the poets of the new school consider carefully Wolfe's 'Sir John Moore,' Campbell's 'Hohenlinden,' 'Mariners of England,' and 'Rule Britannia,' Hood's 'Song of the Shirt' and 'Bridge of Sighs,' and then ask themselves, as men who would be poets, were it not better to have written any one of those glorious lyrics than all which John Keats has left behind him; and let them be sure that, howsoever they may answer the question to themselves, the sound heart of the English people has already made its choice; and that when that beautiful 'Hero and Leander,' in which Hood has outrivalled the conceit-mongers at their own weapons, by virtue of that very terseness, clearness, and manliness which they neglect, has been gathered to the limbo of the Crashawes and Marinos, his 'Song of the Shirt' and his 'Bridge of Sighs' will be esteemed by great new English nations far beyond the seas, for what they are—two of the most noble lyric poems ever written by an English pen. If our poetasters talk with Wordsworth of the dignity and pathos of the commonest human things, they will find them there in perfection; if they talk about the cravings of the new time, they will find them there. If they want the truly sublime and the awful, they will find them there also. But they will find none of their own favourite concetti; hardly even a metaphor; no taint of this new poetic diction into which we have now fallen, after all our abuse of the far more manly and sincere 'poetic diction' of the eighteenth century; they will find no loitering by the way to argue and moralize, and grumble

at Providence, and show off the author's own genius and sensibility; they will find, in short, two real works of art, earnest, melodious, self-forgetful, knowing clearly what they want to say, and saying it in the shortest, the simplest, the calmest, the most finished words. Saying it—rather taught to say it. For if that 'divine inspiration of poets,' of which the poetasters make such rash and irreverent boastings, have indeed, as all ages have held, any reality corresponding to it, it will rather be bestowed on such works as these, appeals from unrighteous man to a righteous God, than on men whose only claim to celestial help seems to be that mere passionate sensibility; which our modern Draco once described when speaking of poor John Keats, as 'an infinite hunger after all manner of pleasant things, crying to the universe, 'Oh, that thou wert one great lump of sugar, that I might suck thee!' '

Our task is ended. We have given as plainly as we can our reasons for the opinion which this Magazine has exprest several times already, that with the exception of Mr. Allingham, our young poets are a very hopeless generation, and will so continue unless they utterly repent and amend. If they do not choose to awaken themselves from within, all that is left for us is to hope that they may be awakened from without, or by some radical revulsion in public taste be shown their own real value and durability, and compelled to be true and manly under pain of being laughed at and forgotten. A general war might, amid all its inevitable horrors, sweep away at once the dyspeptic unbelief, the insincere bigotry, the effeminate frivolity which now paralyses our poetry as much as it does our action, and strike from England's heart a lightning flash of noble deeds, a thunder peal of noble song. Such a case is neither an impossible nor a far-fetched one; let us not doubt that

by some other means if not by that the immense volume of thought and power which is still among us will soon find its utterance, and justify itself to after ages by showing in harmonious and self-restrained poetry its kinship to the heroic and the beautiful of every age and clime. And till then; till the sunshine and the thaw shall come, and the spring flowers burst into bud and bloom, heralding a new golden year in the world's life, let us even be content with our pea-green and orange fungi; nay, even admire them, as not without their own tawdry beauty, their clumsy fitness; for after all they are products of nature, though only of her dyspepsia; and grow and breed—as indeed cutaneous disorders do — by an organic law of their own; fulfilling their little destiny, and then making, according to Professor Way, by no means bad manure. And so we take our leave of Mr. Alexander Smith, entreating him, if these pages meet his eye, to consider three things, namely, that in as far as he has written poetry, he is on the road to ruin by reason of following the worst possible models. That in as far as the prevailing taste has put these models before him, he is neither to take much blame to himself, nor to be in anywise disheartened for the future. That in as far as he shall utterly reverse his whole poetic method, whether in morals or in æsthetics, leave undone all that he has done, and do all that he has not done, he will become what he evidently, by grace of God, can become if he will, namely, a lasting and a good poet.

THOUGHTS ON SHELLEY AND BYRON.*

THE poets, who forty years ago proclaimed their intention of working a revolution in English literature, and who have succeeded in their purpose, recommended especially a more simple and truthful view of nature. The established canons of poetry were to be discarded as artificial; as to the matter, the poet was to represent mere nature as he saw her; as to form, he was to be his own law. Freedom and nature were to be his watchwords.

No theory could be more in harmony with the spirit of the age, and the impulse which had been given to it by the burning words of Jean Jacques Rousseau. The school which arose expressed fairly the unrest and unruliness of the time, its weariness of artificial restraint and unmeaning laws, its craving after a nobler and a more earnest life, its sense of a glory and mystery in the physical universe, hidden from the poets of the two preceding centuries, and now revealed by science. So far all was hopeful. But it soon became apparent, that each poet's practical success in carrying out the theory was, paradoxically enough, in inverse proportion to his belief in it; that those who like Wordsworth, Southey, and Keats, talked most about naturalness and freedom, and most openly reprobated the school of Pope, were, after all, least natural and least free; that the balance of those excellences inclined much more to those who like Campbell, Rogers, Crabbe, and Moore,

* Fraser's Magazine, November, 1853.

troubled their heads with no theories, but followed the best old models which they knew; and that the rightful sovereign of the new Parnassus, Lord Byron, protested against the new movement, while he followed it; upheld to the last the models which it was the fashion to decry, confest to the last, in poetry as in morals, 'Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor,' and uttered again and again prophecies of the downfall of English poetry and English taste, which seem to be on the eve of realization.

Now no one will, we presume, be silly enough to say that humanity has gained nothing by all the very beautiful poetry which has been poured out on it during the last thirty years in England. Nevertheless, when we see poetry dying down among us year by year, although the age is becoming year by year more marvellous and inspiring, we have a right to look for some false principle in a school which has had so little enduring vitality, which seems now to be able to perpetuate nothing of itself but its vices.

The answer so easy twenty years ago, that the new poetry was spoiled by an influx of German bad taste, will hardly hold good now, except with a very few very ignorant people. It is now known, of course, that whatsoever quarrel Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe may have had with Pope, it was not on account of his being too severe an artist, but too loose a one; not for being too classical, but not classical enough; that English poets borrowed from them nothing but their most boyish and immature types of thought, and that these were reproduced, and laughed at here, while the men themselves were writing works of a purity, and loftiness, and completeness, unknown to the world—except in the writings of Milton—for nearly two centuries. This feature, however, of the new German poetry,

was exactly the one which no English poet deigned to imitate, save Byron alone; on whom, accordingly, Goethe always looked with admiration and affection. But the rest went their way unheeding; and if they have defects, those defects are their own; for when they did copy the German taste, they, for the most part, deliberately chose the evil, and refused the good; and have their reward in a fame which we believe will prove itself a very short-lived one.

But we cannot deny that, in spite of all faults, these men had a strength. They have exercised an influence. And they have done so by virtue of seeing a fact which more complete, and in some cases more manly poets, did not see. Strangely enough, Shelley, the man who was the greatest sinner of them all against the canons of good taste, was the man who saw that new fact, if not most clearly, still most intensely, and who proclaimed it most boldly. His influence, therefore, is outliving that of his compeers, and growing and spreading, for good and for evil; and will grow and spread for years to come, as long as the present great unrest goes on smouldering in men's hearts, till the hollow settlement of 1815 is burst asunder anew, and men feel that they are no longer in the beginning of the end, but in the end itself, and that this long thirty years' prologue to the reconstruction of rotten Europe is played out at last, and the drama itself begun.

Such is the way of Providence; the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor the propheey to the wise. The Spirit bloweth where He listeth, and sends on His errands—those who deny Him, rebel against Him—profligates, madmen; and hysterical Rousseaus, hysterical Shelleys, uttering words like the east wind. He uses strange tools in His cosmogony: but He does not use them in vain. By bad men if not

by good, by fools if not by wise, His work is done, and done right well.

There was, then, a strength and a truth in all these men; and it was this—that more or less clearly, they all felt that they were standing between two worlds; amid the ruins of an older age; upon the threshold of a new one. To Byron's mind, the decay and rottenness of the old was, perhaps, the most palpable; to Shelley's, the possible glory of the new. Wordsworth declared—a little too noisily, we think, as if he had been the first to discover the truth,—the dignity and divineness of the most simple human facts and relationships. Coleridge declares that the new can only assume living form, by growing organically out of the old institutions. Keats gives a sad, and yet a wholesome answer to them both, as, young and passionate, he goes down with Faust 'to the Mothers,'

> To the rich warm youth of the nations,
> Childlike in virtue and faith, though childlike in passion and pleasure,
> Childlike still, still near to the gods, while the sunset of Eden
> Lingered in rose-red rays on the peaks of Ionian mountains.

And there, amid the old classic forms, he cries—'These things, too, are eternal:

> A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.

These, or things even fairer than they, must have their place in the new world, if it is to be really a home for the human race.' So he sings, as best he can, the half-educated and consumptive stable-keeper's son, from his prison-house of London brick, and in one mighty yearn after that beauty from which he is debarred, breaks his young heart, and dies, leaving a name not 'writ in water,' as he dreamed, but on all fair things, all lovers' hearts, for evermore.

Here then, to return, is the reason why the hearts

of the present generation have been influenced so mightily by these men, rather than by those of whom Byron wrote, with perfect sincerity—

> Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe, will try
> 'Gainst you the question with posterity.

These lines, written in 1818, were meant to apply only to Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey. Whether they be altogether just or unjust, is not now the question: yet it must seem somewhat strange to our young poets, that Shelley's name is not among those who are to try the question of immortality against the Lake School; and yet many of his most beautiful poems had been already written. Were, then, 'The Revolt of Islam and Alastor,' it seems, not destined, in Byron's opinion, to live as long as the 'Lady of the Lake,' and the 'Mariners of England?' Perhaps not. At least the omission of Shelley's name is noteworthy. But still more noteworthy are these words of his to Mr. Murray, dated January 23, 1819:—

'Read Pope—most of you don't—but do . . . . and the inevitable consequence would be, that you would burn all that I have ever written, and all your other wretched Claudians of the day (except Scott and Crabbe) into the bargain.' . . . .

And here arises a new question—Is Shelley, then, among the Claudians? It is a hard saying. The present generation will receive it with shouts of laughter. Some future one, which studies and imitates Shakspeare instead of anatomizing him, and which gradually awakens to the now forgotten fact, that a certain man named Edmund Spenser once wrote a poem, the like of which the earth never saw before, and perhaps may never see again, may be inclined to acquiesce in the verdict, and believe that Byron had a discrimination in

this matter, as in a hundred more, far more acute than any of his compeers, and had not eaten in vain, poor fellow, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the meanwhile, we may perceive in the poetry of the two men deep and radical differences, indicating a spiritual difference between them even more deep, which may explain the little notice which Byron takes of Shelley's poetry, and the fact that the two men had no deep sympathy for each other, and could not in anywise 'pull together' during their sojourn in Italy. Doubtless, there were plain outward faults of temper and character on both sides; neither was in a state of mind which could trust itself, or be trusted by those who loved them best. Friendship can only consist with the calm and self-restraint and self-respect of moral and intellectual health; and both were diseased, fevered, ready to take offence, ready, unwittingly, to give it. But the diseases of the two were different, as their natures were; and Shelley's fever was not Byron's.

Now it is worth remarking, that it is Shelley's form of fever, rather than Byron's, which has been of late years the prevailing epidemic. Since Shelley's poems have become known in England, and a timid public, after approaching in fear and trembling the fountain which was understood to be poisoned, has begun first to sip, and then, finding the magic water at all events sweet enough, to quench its thirst with unlimited draughts, Byron's fiercer wine has lost favour. Well—at least the taste of the age is more refined, if that be matter of congratulation. And there is an excuse for preferring champagne to waterside porter, heady with grains of paradise and quassia, salt and cocculum indicum. Nevertheless, worse ingredients than œnanthic acid may lurk in the delicate draught, and the

Devil's Elixir may be made fragrant, and sweet, and transparent enough, as French moralists well know, for the most fastidious palate. The private sipping of eau de Cologne, say the London physicians, has increased mightily of late: and so has the reading of Shelley. It is not surprising. Byron's Corsairs and Laras have been, on the whole, impossible during the thirty years' peace; and piracy and profligacy are at all times, and especially now-a-days, expensive amusements, and often require a good private fortune —rare among poets. They have, therefore, been wisely abandoned as ideals, except among a few young persons, who used to wear turn-down collars, and are now attempting mustachios and Mazzini hats. But even among them, and among their betters—rather their more-respectables—nine-tenths of the bad influence which is laid at Byron's door, really is owing to Shelley. Among the many good-going gentlemen and ladies, Byron is generally spoken of with horror—he is 'so wicked,' forsooth; while poor Shelley, 'poor dear Shelley,' is 'very wrong, of course,' but 'so refined,' 'so beautiful,' 'so tender,'—a fallen angel, while Byron is a satyr and a devil. We boldly deny the verdict. Neither of the two are devils: as for angels, when we have seen one, we shall be better able to give an opinion: at present, Shelley is in our eyes far less like one of those old Hebrew and Miltonic angels, fallen or unfallen, than Byron is. And as for the satyr; the less that is said for Shelley, on that point, the better. If Byron sinned more desperately and flagrantly than he, it was done under the temptations of rank, wealth, disappointed love, and under the impulses of an animal nature, to which Shelley's passions were

As moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine.

And, at all events, Byron never set to work to consecrate his own sin into a religion, and proclaim the worship of uncleanness as the last and highest ethical development of 'pure' humanity. No—Byron may be brutal; but he never cants. If at moments he finds himself in hell, he never turns round to the world, and melodiously informs them that it is heaven, if they could but see it in its true light.

The truth is, that what has put Byron out of favour with the public of late, is not his faults, but his excellencies. His artistic good taste, his classical polish, his sound shrewd sense, his hatred of cant, his insight into humbug, above all, his shallow, pitiable habit of being always intelligible; these are the sins which condemn him in the eyes of a mesmerizing, table-turning, spirit-rapping, Spiritualizing, Romanizing generation, who read Shelley in secret, and delight in his bad taste, mysticism, extravaganee, and vague and pompous sentimentalism. The age is an effeminate one; and it can well afford to pardon the lewdness of the gentle and sensitive vegetarian, while it has no mercy for that of the sturdy peer, proud of his bull-neck and his boxing, who kept bears and bull-dogs, drilled Greek ruffians at Missolonghi, and 'had no objection to a pot of beer;' and who might, if he had reformed, have made a gallant English gentleman; while Shelley, if once his intense self-opinion had deserted him, would have probably ended in Rome, as an Oratorian or a Passionist.

We would that it were only for this count that Byron has had to make way for Shelley. There is, as we said before, a deeper moral difference between the men, which makes the weaker, rather than the stronger, find favour in young men's eyes. For Byron has the

most intense and awful sense of moral law—of law external to himself. Shelley has little or none; less, perhaps, than any known writer who has ever meddled with moral questions. Byron's cry is, I am miserable, because law exists; and I have broken it, broken it so habitually, that now I cannot help breaking it. I have tried to eradicate the sense of it by speculation, by action: but I cannot—

> The tree of knowledge is not the tree of life.

There is a moral law independent of us, and yet the very marrow of our life, which punishes and rewards us by no arbitrary external penalties, but by our own conscience of being what we are.

> The mind which is immortal, makes itself
> Requital for its good or evil thoughts;
> Is its own origin of ill, and end—
> And its own place and time—its innate sense
> When stript of this mortality, derives
> No colour from the fleeting things about,
> But is absorbed in sufferance or in joy,
> Born from the knowledge of its own desert.

This idea, confused, intermitted, obscured by all forms of evil—for it was not discovered, but only in the process of discovery—is the one which comes out with greater and greater strength, through all Corsairs, Laras, and Parasinas, till it reaches its completion in Cain and in Manfred, of both of which we do boldly say, that if any sceptical poetry at all be right, which we often question, they are right and not wrong; that in Cain, as in Manfred, the awful problem which, perhaps, had better not have been put at all, is nevertheless fairly put, and the solution, as far as it is seen, fairly confessed; namely, that there is an absolute and eternal law in the heart of man, which sophistries of his own, or of other beings, may make him forget,

deny, blaspheme; but which exists externally, and will assert itself. If this be not the meaning of Manfred, especially of that great scene in the chamois hunter's cottage, what is?—If this be not the meaning of Cain, and his awful awakening after the murder, not to any mere dread of external punishment, but to an overwhelming, instinctive, inarticulate sense of having done wrong, what is?

Yes; that law exists, let it never be forgotten, is the real meaning of Byron, down to that last terrible Don Juan, in which he sits himself down, in artificial calm, to trace the gradual rotting and degradation of a man without law, the slave of his own pleasures; a picture happily never finished, because he who painted it was taken away before he had learnt, perhaps when he was beginning to turn back from—the lower depth within the lowest deep.

Now to this whole form of consciousness, poor Shelley's mind is altogether antipodal. His whole life through was a denial of external law, and a substitution in its place of internal sentiment. Byron's cry is, There is a law, and therefore I am miserable. Why cannot I keep the law? Shelley's is, There is a law, and therefore I am miserable. Why should not the law be abolished?—Away with it, for it interferes with my sentiments—Away with marriage, 'custom and faith, the foulest birth of time.'—We do not wish to follow him down into the fearful sins which he defended with the small powers of reasoning—and they were peculiarly small—which he possessed. Let any one who wishes to satisfy himself of the real difference between Byron's mind and Shelley's, compare the writings in which each of them treats the same subject—namely, that frightful question about the relation

of the sexes, which forms, evidently, Manfred's crime; and see if the result is not simply this, that Shelley glorifies, what Byron damns. 'Lawless love' is Shelley's expressed ideal of the relation of the sexes: and his justice, his benevolence, his pity, are all equally lawless. 'Follow your instincts,' is his one moral rule, confounding the very lowest animal instincts with those lofty ideas of right, which it was the will of Heaven that he should retain, ay, and love, to the very last, and so reducing them all to the level of sentiments. 'Follow your instincts'—But what if our instincts lead us to eat animal food? 'Then you must follow the instincts of me Percy Bysshe Shelley. I think it horrible, cruel; it offends my taste.' What if our instincts lead us to tyrannize over our fellow-men? 'Then you must repress those instincts. I Shelley think that, too, horrible and cruel.' Whether it be vegetarianism or liberty, the rule is practically the same,—sentiment; which, in his case, as in the case of all sentimentalists, turns out to mean at last, not the sentiments of mankind in general, but the private sentiments of the writer. This is Shelley; a sentimentalist pure and simple: incapable of anything like inductive reasoning; unable to take cognizance of any facts but those which please his taste, or to draw any conclusion from them but such as also pleases his taste; as, for example, in that eighth stanza of the Ode to Liberty, which, had it been written by any other man but Shelley, possessing the same knowledge as he, one would have called a wicked and deliberate lie—but in his case, is to be simply passed over with a sigh, like a young lady's proofs of table-turning and rapping spirits. She wished to see it so—and therefore so she saw it.

For Shelley's nature is utterly womanish. Not

merely his weak points, but his strong ones, are those of a woman. Tender and pitiful as a woman: and yet, when angry, shrieking, railing, hysterical as a woman. The physical distaste for meat and fermented liquors, coupled with the hankering after physical horrors, are especially feminine. The nature of a woman looks out of that wild, beautiful, girlish face—the nature: but not the spirit; not

> The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill.

The lawlessness of the man, with the sensibility of the woman. . . . Alas for him! He, too, might have discovered what Byron did; for were not his errors avenged upon him within, more terribly even than without? His cries are like the wails of a child, inarticulate, peevish, irrational; and yet his pain fills his whole being, blackens the very face of nature to him: but he will not confess himself in the wrong—Once only, if we recollect rightly, the truth flashes across him for a moment, amid the clouds of selfish sorrow—

> Alas, I have nor hope nor health,
> Nor peace within, nor calm around;
> Nor that content surpassing wealth
> The sage in meditation found,
> And walked with inward glory crowned.

'Nor'——alas for the spiritual bathos, which follows that short gleam of healthy feeling, and coming to himself—

> — fame nor power, nor love, nor leisure,
> Others I see whom these surround,
> Smiling they live and call life pleasure,
> To me that cup has been dealt in another measure!

Poor Shelley! As if the peace within, and the calm around, and the content surpassing wealth, were things which were to be put in the same category with fame, and power, and love, and leisure. As if they

were things which could be 'dealt' to any man; instead of depending (as Byron, who, amid all his fearful sins, was a man, knew well enough) upon a man's self, a man's own will, and that will exerted to do a will exterior to itself, to know and to obey a law. But no, the cloud of sentiment must close over again, and

> Yet now despair itself is mild
> Even as the winds and waters are;
> I could lie down like a tired child,
> And weep away this life of care,
> Which I have borne, and still must bear,
> Till death like sleep might seize on me,
> And I might feel in the warm air,
> My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
> Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony! . .

Too beautiful to laugh at, however empty and sentimental. True: but why beautiful? Because there is a certain sincerity in it, which breeds coherence and melody, which, in short, makes it poetry. But what if such a tone of mind be consciously encouraged, even insincerely affected as the ideal state for a poet's mind, as his followers have done?

The mischief which such a man would do is conceivable enough. He stands out, both by his excellencies and his defects, as the spokesman and ideal of all the unrest and unhealth of sensitive young men for many a year after. His unfulfilled prophecies only help to increase that unrest. Who shall blame either him for uttering those prophecies, or them for longing for their fulfilment? Must we not thank the man who gives us fresh hope that this earth will not be always as it is now? His notion of what it will be may be, as Shelley's was, vague, even in some things wrong and undesirable. Still, we must accept his hope and faith in the spirit, not in the letter. So have thousands of young men felt, who would have shrunk with disgust

from some of poor Shelley's details of the 'good time coming.' And shame on him who should wish to rob them of such a hope, even if it interfered with his favourite 'scheme of unfulfilled prophecy.' So men have felt Shelley's spell a wondrous one—perhaps, they think, a life-giving, regenerative one. And yet what dream at once more shallow, and more impossible? Get rid of kings and priests; marriage may stay, pending discussions on the rights of women. Let the poet speak—what he is to say being, of course, a matter of utterly secondary import, provided only that he be a poet; and then the millennium will appear of itself, and the devil be exorcised with a kiss from all hearts—except, of course, those of 'pale priests,' and 'tyrants, with their sneer of cold command' (who, it seems, have not been got rid of after all), and the Cossacks and Croats whom they may choose to call to their rescue. . . . . And on the appearance of the said Cossacks and Croats, the poet's vision stops short, and all is blank beyond.—A recipe for the production of millenniums which has this one advantage, that it is small enough to be comprehended by the very smallest minds, and reproduced thereby, with a difference, in such spasmodic melodies as seem to those small minds to be imitations of Shelley's nightingale notes.

For nightingale notes they truly are. In spite of all his faults—and there are few poetic faults in which he does not indulge, to their very highest power,—in spite of his 'interfluous' and 'innumerous,' and the rest of his bad English—in spite of bombast, horrors, maundering, sheer stuff and nonsense of all kinds, there is a plaintive natural melody about this man, such as no other English poet has ever uttered, except Shakspeare, in some few immortal songs. Who that has read Shelley does not recollect scraps worthy to stand

by Ariel's song—chaste, simple, unutterably musical? Yes, when he will be himself—Shelley the scholar and the gentleman and the singer, and leave philosophy and politics, which he does not understand, and shriekings and cursings, which are unfit for any civilized and self-respecting man, he is perfect. Like the American mocking-bird, he is harsh only when aping other men's tunes—his true power lies in his own 'native wood-notes wild.'

But it is not this faculty of his which has been imitated by his scholars; for it is not this faculty which made him their ideal, however it may have attracted them. All which sensible men deplore in him, is that which poetasters have exalted in him. His morbidity and his doubt have become in their eyes his differential energy, because, too often, it was all in him with which they had wit to sympathize. They found it easy to curse and complain, instead of helping to mend. So had he. They found it pleasant to confound institutions with the abuses which defaced them. So had he. They found it pleasant to give way to their spleen. So had he. They found it pleasant to believe that the poet was to regenerate the world, without having settled with what he was to regenerate it. So had he. They found it more pleasant to obey sentiment than inductive laws. So had he. They found it more pleasant to hurl about enormous words and startling figures, than to examine reverently the awful depths of beauty which lie in the simplest words, and the severest figures. So had he.

And thus arose a spasmodic, vague, extravagant, effeminate, school of poetry, which has been too often hastily and unfairly fathered upon Byron. Doubtless Byron has helped to its formation; but only in as far as his poems possess, or rather seem to possess, ele-

ments in common with Shelley's. For that conscious struggle against law, by which law is discovered, may easily enough be confounded with the utter repudiation of it. Both forms of mind will discuss the same questions; both will discuss them freely, with a certain plainness and daring, which may range through all grades, from the bluntness of Socrates down to reckless immodesty and profaneness. The world will hardly distinguish between the two; it did not in Socrates' case, mistook his reverent irreverence for Atheism, and martyred him accordingly, as it has since martyred Luther's memory. Probably, too, if a living struggle is going on in the writer's mind, he will not have distinguished the two elements in himself; he will be profane when he fancies himself only arguing for truth; he will be only arguing for truth, where he seems to the respectable undoubting to be profane. And in the meanwhile, whether the respectable understand him or not, the young and the inquiring, much more the distempered, who would be glad to throw off moral law, will sympathize with him, often more than he sympathizes with himself. Words thrown off in the heat of passion; shameful self-revealings which he has written with his very heart's blood: ay, even fallacies which he has put into the mouths of dramatic characters for the very purpose of refuting them, or at least of calling on all who read to help him to refute them, and to deliver him from the ugly dream, all these will, by the lazy, the frivolous, the feverish, the discontented, be taken for integral parts and noble traits of the man to whom they are attracted, by finding that he, too, has the same doubts and struggles as themselves, that he has a voice and art to be their spokesman. And hence arises confusion on confusion, misconception on misconception. The man is honoured for his dishonour.

Chronic disease is taken for a new type of health; and Byron is admired and imitated for that which Byron is trying to tear out of his own heart, and trample under foot as his curse and bane, something which is not Byron's self, but Byron's house-fiend, and tyrant, and shame. And in the meanwhile that which calls itself respectability and orthodoxy, and is—unless Augustine lied—neither of them, stands by; and instead of echoing the voice of him who said, 'Come to me ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' mumbles proudly to itself, with the Pharisees of old, 'This people, which knoweth not the law, is accursed.'

We do not seek to excuse Byron any more than we do Shelley. They both sinned. They both paid bitter penalty for their sin. How far they were guilty, or which of them was the more guilty, we know not. We can judge no man. It is as poets and teachers, not as men and responsible spirits; not in their inward beings, known only to Him who made them, not even to themselves, but in their outward utterance, that we have a right to compare them. Both have done harm. Neither have, we firmly believe harmed any human being who had not already the harm within himself. It is not by introducing evil, but by calling into consciousness and more active life evil which was already lurking in the heart, that any writer makes men worse. Thousands doubtless have read Byron and Shelley, and worse books, and have risen from them as pure as when they sat down. In evil as well as in good, the eye only sees that which it brings with it the power of seeing—say rather, the wish to see. But it is because, in spite of all our self-glorifying pæans, our taste has become worse and not better, that Shelley, the man who conceitedly despises and denies law, is taking the place of Byron, the man who only struggles against it, and who shows his honesty and his

greatness most by confessing that his struggles are ineffectual; that, Titan as he may look to the world, his strength is misdirected, a mere furious weakness, which proclaims him a slave in fetters, while prurient young gentlemen are fancying him heaping hills on hills, and scaling Olympus itself. They are tired of that notion, however, now. They have begun to suspect that Byron did not scale Olympus after all. How much more pleasant a leader, then, must Shelley be, who unquestionably did scale his little Olympus—having made it himself first to fit his own stature. The man who has built the hay-rick will doubtless climb it again, if need be, as often as desired, and whistle on the top, after the fashion of the rick-building guild, triumphantly enough. For after all Shelley's range of vision is very narrow, his subjects few, his reflections still fewer, when compared, not only with such a poet as Spenser, but with his own contemporaries; above all with Byron. He has a deep heart, but not a wide one; an intense eye, but not a catholic one. And, therefore, he never wrote a real drama; for in spite of all that has been said to the contrary, Beatrice Cenci is really none other than Percy Bysshe Shelley himself in petticoats.

But we will let them both be. Perhaps they know better now.

One very ugly superstition, nevertheless, we must mention, of which these two men have been, in England at least, the great hierophants; that namely, on which we touched in our last—the right of 'genius' to be 'eccentric.' Doubtless there are excuses for such a notion: but it is one against which every wise man must set his face like a flint, and at the risk of being called a 'Philister' and a 'flunkey,' take part boldly with respectability and this wicked world, and declare them to

be for once utterly in the right. Still there are excuses for it. A poet, especially one who wishes to be not merely a describer of pretty things, but a 'Vates' and seer of new truth, must often say things which other people do not like to say, and do things which others do not like to do. And, moreover, he will be generally gifted, for the very purpose of enabling him to say and do these strange things, with a sensibility more delicate than common, often painful enough to himself. How easy for such a man to think that he has a right not to be as other men are; to despise little conventionalities, courtesies, even decencies; to offend boldly and carelessly, conscious that he has something right and valuable within himself, which not only atones for such defects, but allows him to indulge in them, as badges of his own superiority!

This has been the notion of artistic genius which has spread among us of late years, just in proportion as the real amount of artistic genius has diminished; till we see men, on the mere ground of being literary men, too refined to keep accounts, or pay their butchers' bills; affecting the pettiest absurdities in dress, in manner, in food; giving themselves credit for being unable to bear a noise, keep their temper, educate their own children, associate with their fellow men; and a thousand other paltry weaknesses, moroseness, self-indulgences, fastidiousnesses, vulgarities—for all this is essentially vulgar, and demands, not honour and sympathy, but a chapter in Mr. Thackeray's Book of Snobs. Non sic itur ad astra. Self-indulgence and exclusiveness can only be a proof of weakness. It may accompany talent, but it proves that talent to be partial and defective. The brain may be large, but the manhood, the 'virtus,' is small, where such things are allowed, much more where they are gloried in. A poet such a

man may be, but a world-poet never. He is sectarian, a poetical Quaker, a Puritan, who, forgetting that the truth which he possesses is equally the right and inheritance of every man he meets, takes up a peculiar dress or phraseology, as symbols of his fancied difference from his human brothers. All great poets, till Shelley and Byron, as far as we can discern, have been men especially free from eccentricities; careful not merely of the chivalries and the respectabilities, but also of the courtesies and the petty conventionalities, of the age in which they lived; altogether well-bred men of the world. The answer, that they learnt the ways of courts, does not avail; for if they had had no innate good-breeding, reticence, respect for forms and customs, they would never have come near courts at all. It is not a question of rank and fashion, but of good feeling, common sense, unselfishness. Goethe, Milton, Spenser, Shakspeare, Rabelais, Ariosto, were none of them high-born men; several of them low-born; and only rose to the society of high-born men because they were themselves innately high-bred, polished, complete, without exaggerations, affectations, deformities, weaknesses of mind and taste, whatever may have been their weaknesses on certain points of morals. The man of all men most bepraised by the present generation of poets, is perhaps Wolfgang von Goethe. Why is it, then, that of all men he is the one whom they strive to be most unlike?

And if this be good counsel for the man who merely wishes—and no blame to him—to sing about beautiful things in a beautiful way, it applies with tenfold force to the poet who desires honestly to proclaim great truths. If he has to offend the prejudices of the world in important things, that is all the more reason for his bowing to those prejudices in little things, and being

content to be like his neighbours in outward matters, in order that he may make them like himself in inward ones. Shall such a man dare to hinder his own message, to drive away the very hearers to whom he believes himself to be sent, for the sake of his own nerves, laziness, antipathies, much more of his own vanity and pride? If he does so, he is unfaithful to that very genius on which he prides himself. He denies its divinity, by treating it as his own possession, to be displayed or hidden as he chooses, for his own enjoyment, his own self-glorification. Well for such a man if a day comes to him in which he will look back with shame and self-reproach, not merely on every scandal which he may have caused by breaking the moral and social laws of humanity, by neglecting to restrain his appetites, pay his bills, and keep his engagements; but also on every conceited word and look, every gaucherie and rudeness, every self-indulgent moroseness and fastidiousness, as sins against the sacred charge which has been committed to him; and determines with that Jew of old, who, to judge from his letter to Philemon, was one of the most perfect gentlemen of God's making who ever walked this earth, to become 'all things to all men, if by any means he may save some.'

HOURS WITH THE MYSTICS.*

FEW readers of this magazine probably know anything about 'Mystics;' know even what the term means: but as it is plainly connected with the adjective 'mystical,' they probably suppose it to denote some sort of vague, dreamy, sentimental, and therefore useless and undesirable, personage. Nor can we blame them if they do so; for mysticism is a form of thought and feeling now all but extinct in England. There are probably not ten thorough mystics among all our millions; the mystic philosophers are very little read by our scholars, and read not for but in spite of their mysticism; and our popular theology has so completely rid itself of any mystic elements, that our divines look with utter disfavour upon it, use the word always as a term of opprobrium, and interpret the mystic expressions in our liturgy—which mostly occur in the Collects—according to the philosophy of Locke, really ignorant, it would seem, that they were written by Platonist mystics.

We do not blame them, either, save in as far as teachers of men are blameworthy for being ignorant of any form of thought which has ever had a living hold upon good and earnest men, and may therefore take hold of them again. But the English are not now a mystic people, any more than the old Romans were;

* Fraser's Magazine, September, 1856.—'Hours with the Mystics.' By Robert Alfred Vaughan, B.A. Two Volumes. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1856.

their habit of mind, their destiny in the world, are like those of the Romans, altogether practical; and who can be surprised if they do not think about what they are not called upon to think about?

Nevertheless, it is quite a mistake to suppose that mysticism is by its own nature unpractical. The greatest and most prosperous races of antiquity—the Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindoos, Greeks—had the mystic element as strong and living in them as the Germans have now; and certainly we cannot call them unpractical peoples. They fell and came to ruin—as the Germans may do—when their mysticism became unpractical: but their thought remained, to be translated into practice by sounder-hearted races than themselves. Rome learnt from Greece, and did, in some confused imperfect way, that which Greece only dreamed; just as future nations may act hereafter, nobly and usefully, on the truths which Germans discover, only to put in a book and smoke over. For they are terribly practical people, these mystics, quiet students and devotees as they may seem. They go, or seem to go, down to the roots of things, after a way of their own; and lay foundations on which—be they sound or unsound—those who come after them cannot choose but build; as we are building now. For our forefathers were mystics for generations; they were mystics in the forests of Germany and in the dales of Norway; they were mystics in the convents and the universities of the middle ages; they were mystics, all the deepest and noblest minds of them, during the Elizabethan era.

Even now the few mystic writers of this island are exercising more influence on thought than any other men, for good or for evil. Coleridge and Alexander Knox have changed the minds, and with them the acts, of thousands; and when they are accused of having ori-

ginated, unknowingly, the whole 'Tractarian' movement, those who have watched English thought carefully can only answer, that on the confession of the elder Tractarians themselves, the allegation is true: but that they originated a dozen other 'movements' beside in the most opposite directions, and that free-thinking Emersonians will be as ready as Romish perverts and good plain English churchmen to confess that the critical point of their life was determined by the writings of the fakeer of Highgate. At this very time, too, the only real mystic of any genius who is writing and teaching is exercising more practical influence, infusing more vigorous life into the minds of thousands of men and women, than all the other teachers of England put together; and has set rolling a ball which may in the next half century gather into an avalanche, perhaps utterly different in form, material, and direction, from all which he expects.

So much for mystics being unpractical. If we look faithfully into the meaning of their name, we shall see why, for good or for evil, they cannot be unpractical; why they, let them be the most self-absorbed of recluses, are the very men who sow the seeds of great schools, great national and political movements, even great religions.

A mystic—according to the Greek etymology—should signify one who is initiated into mysteries: one whose eyes are opened to see things which other people cannot see. And the true mystic in all ages and countries, has believed that this was the case with him. He believes that there is an invisible world as well as a visible one; so do most men: but the mystic believes also that this same invisible world is not merely a supernumerary one world more, over and above the earth on which he lives, and the stars over his head,

but that it is the cause of them and the ground of them; that it was the cause of them at first, and is the cause of them now, even to the budding of every flower, and the falling of every pebble to the ground; and therefore, that having been before this visible world, it will be after it, and endure just as real, living, and eternal, though matter were annihilated to-morrow.

'But, on this showing, every Christian, nay, every religious man, is a mystic; for he believes in an invisible world?' The answer is found in the plain fact, that good Christians here in England do not think so themselves; that they dislike and dread mysticism; would not understand it if it were preached to them; are more puzzled by those utterances of St. John, which mystics have always claimed as justifying their theories, than by any part of their bibles. There is a positive and conscious difference between popular metaphysics and mysticism; and it seems to lie in this: the invisible world in which Englishmen in general believe, is one which happens to be invisible now, but which will not be so hereafter. When they speak of the other world they mean a place which their bodily eyes will see some day, and could see now if they were allowed; when they speak of spirits they mean ghosts who could, and perhaps do, make themselves visible to men's bodily eyes. We are not inquiring here whether they be right or wrong; we are only specifying a common form of human thought.

The mystic, on the other hand, believes that the invisible world is so by its very nature, and must be so for ever. He lives therein now, he holds, and will live in it through eternity: but he will see it never with any bodily eyes, not even with the eyes of any future 'glorified' body. It is ipso facto not to be seen, only to be believed in; never for him will 'faith be changed

for sight,' as the popular theologians say that it will; for this invisible world is only to be 'spiritually discerned.'

This is the mystic idea, pure and simple; of course there are various grades of it, as there are of the popular one; for no man holds his own creed and nothing more; and it is good for him, in this piecemeal and shortsighted world, that he should not. Were he overtrue to his own idea, he would become a fanatic, perhaps a madman. And so the modern evangelical of the Venn and Newton school, to whom mysticism is neology and nehushtan, when he speaks of 'spiritual experiences,' uses the adjective in its purely mystic sense; while Bernard of Cluny, in his once famous hymn, 'Hic breve vivitur,' mingles the two conceptions of the unseen world in inextricable confusion. Between these two extreme poles, in fact, we have every variety of thought; and it is good for us that we should have them; for no one man or school of men can grasp the whole truth, and every intermediate modification supplies some link in the great cycle of facts which its neighbours have overlooked.

In the minds who have held this belief, that the unseen world is the only real and eternal one, there has generally existed a belief, more or less confused, that the visible world is in some mysterious way a pattern or symbol of the invisible one; that its physical laws are the analogues of the spiritual laws of the eternal world: a belief of which Mr. Vaughan seems to think lightly; though if it be untrue we can hardly see how that metaphoric illustration in which he indulges so freely, and which he often uses in a masterly and graceful way, can be anything but useless trifling. For what is a metaphor or a simile but a mere paralogism—having nothing to do with the matter in hand, and not to be

allowed for a moment to influence the reader's judgment, unless there be some real and objective analogy—homology we should call it—between the physical phenomenon from which the symbol is taken, and the spiritual truth which it is meant to illustrate? What divineness, what logical weight, in our Lord's parables, unless He was by them trying to show his hearers that the laws which they saw at work in the lilies of the field, in the most common occupations of men, were but lower manifestations of the laws by which are governed the inmost workings of the human spirit? What triflers, on any other ground, were Socrates and Plato. What triflers, too, Shakspeare and Spenser. Indeed, we should say that it is the belief, conscious or unconscious, of the eternal correlation of the physical and spiritual worlds, which alone constitutes the essence of a poet.

Of course this idea led, and would necessarily lead, to follies and fancies enough, as long as the phenomena of nature were not carefully studied, and her laws scientifically investigated; and all the dreams of Paracelsus or Van Helmont, Cardan or Crollius, Baptista Porta or Behmen, are but the natural and pardonable errors of minds which, while they felt deeply the sanctity and mystery of nature, had no Baconian philosophy to tell them what nature actually was, and what she actually said. But their idea lives still, and will live as long as the belief in a one God lives. The physical and spiritual worlds cannot be separated by an impassable gulf. They must, in some way or other, reflect each other, even in their minutest phenomena, for so only can they both reflect that absolute primæval Unity in whom they both live and move and have their being. Mr. Vaughan's object, however, has not been to work out in his book such problems as these. Had he done so, he would have made his readers

understand better what mysticism is; he would have avoided several hasty epithets, by the use of which he has, we think, deceived himself into the notion that he has settled a matter by calling it a hard name; he would have explained, perhaps, to himself and to us, many strange and seemingly contradictory facts in the annals of mysticism. But he would also not have written so readable a book. On the whole he has taken the right course, though one wishes that he had carried it out more methodically.

A few friends, literate and comfortable men, and right-hearted Christians withal, meet together to talk over these same mystics, and to read papers and extracts which will give a general notion of the subject from the earliest historic times. The gentlemen talk about and about a little too much; they are a little too fond of illustrations of the popular pulpit style; they are often apt to say each his say, with very little care of what the previous speaker has uttered; in fact these conversations are, as conversations, not good, but as centres of thought they are excellent. There is not a page nor a paragraph in which there is not something well worth recollecting, and often reflections very wise and weighty indeed, which show that whether or not Mr. Vaughan has thoroughly grasped the subject of mysticism, he has grasped and made part of his own mind and heart many things far more practically important than mysticism, or any other form of thought; and no one ought to rise up from the perusal of his book without finding himself, if not a better, at least a more thoughtful man, and perhaps a humbler one also, as he learns how many more struggles and doubts, discoveries, sorrows and joys, the human race has passed through, than are contained in his own private experience.

The true value of the book is, that though not ex-

haustive of the subject, it is suggestive. It affords the best, indeed the only general, sketch of the subject which we have in England, and gives therein boundless food for future thought and reading; and the country parson, or the thoughtful professional man, who has no time to follow out the question for himself, much less to hunt out and examine original documents, may learn from these pages a thousand curious and interesting hints about men of like passions with himself, and about old times, the history of which—as of all times—was not the history of their kings and queens, but of the creeds and deeds of the 'masses' who worked, and failed, and sorrowed, and rejoiced again, unknown to fame. Whatsoever, meanwhile, their own conclusions may be on the subject-matter of the book, they will hardly fail to admire the extraordinary variety and fulness of Mr. Vaughan's reading, and wonder when they hear—unless we are wrongly informed—that he is quite a young man,

> How one small head could compass all he knew.

He begins with the mysticism of the Hindoo Yogis. And to this, as we shall hereafter show, he hardly does justice; but we wish now to point out in detail the extended range of subjects, of each of which the book gives some general notion. From the Hindoos he passes to Philo and the neo-Platonists; from them to the pseudo-Dionysius, and the mysticism of the early Eastern Church. He then traces, shrewdly enough, the influence of the pseudo-Areopagite and the Easterns on the bolder and more practical minds of the Western Latins, and gives a sketch of Bernard and his Abbey of Clairvaux, which brings pleasantly enough before us the ways and works of a long-dead world, which was all but inconceivable to us till Mr. Carlyle disinterred

it in his picture of Abbot Sampson, the hero of Past and Present.

We are next introduced to the mystic schoolmen,—Hugo, and Richard of St. Victor; and then to a far more interesting class of men, and one with which Mr. Vaughan has more sympathy than with any of his characters, perhaps because he knows more about them. His chapters on the German mysticism of the fourteenth century; his imaginary, yet fruitful chronicle of Adolf of Arnstein, with its glimpses of Meister Eckart, Suso, the 'Nameless Wild,' Ruysbroek, and Tauler himself, are admirable, if merely as historic studies, and should be, and we doubt not will be, read by many as practical commentaries on the 'Theologia Germanica,' and on the selection from Tauler's 'Sermons,' now in course of publication. Had all the book been written as these chapters are, we should not have had a word of complaint to make, save when we find the author passing over without a word of comment, utterances which, right or wrong, contain the very key-note and central idea of the men whom he is holding up to admiration, and as we think, of mysticism itself. There is, for instance, a paragraph attributed to Ruysbroek, in p. 275, vol. I., which, whether true or false—and we believe it to be essentially true—is so inexpressibly important, both in the subject which it treats, and in the way in which it treats it, that twenty pages of comment on it would not have been misdevoted. Yet it is passed by without a word.

Going forward to the age of the Reformation, the book then gives us a spirited glimpse of John Bokelson and the Munster Anabaptists, of Carlstadt and the Zurichian prophets, and then dwells at some length on the attempt of that day, to combine physical and spiritual science in occult philosophy. We have enough to

make us wish to hear more of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Behmen, with their alchemy, 'true magic,' doctrines of sympathies,* signatures of things, cabbala, and Gamahea, and the rest of that (now fallen) inverted pyramid of pseudo-science. His estimate of Behmen and his writings, we may observe in passing, is both sound and charitable, and speaks as much for Mr. Vaughan's heart as for his head. Then we have a little about the Rosicrucians and the Comte de Gabalis, and the theory of the Rabbis, from whom the Rosicrucians borrowed so much, all told in the same lively manner, all utterly new to ninety-nine readers out of a hundred, all indicating, we are bound to say, a much more extensive reading than appears on the page itself.

From these he passes to the mysticism of the counter-Reformation, especially to the two great Spanish mystics, St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross. Here again he is new and interesting; but we must regret that he has not been as merciful to Theresa as he has to poor little John.

He then devotes some eighty pages—and very well employed they are—in detailing the strange and sad story of Madame Guyon, and the 'Quietist' movement at Louis Quatorze's Court. Much of this he has taken, with all due acknowledgment, from Upham; but he has told the story most pleasantly, in his own way, and these pages will give a better notion of Fénélon, and of the 'Eagle' (for eagle, read vulture) 'of Meaux,'

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* Why has Mr. Vaughan omitted to give us a few racy lines on Sir Matthew Hale's 'Divine Contemplations of the Magnet,' Sir Kenelm Digby's 'Weapon-Salve,' and Valentine Greatrake's 'Magnetic Cures?' He should have told the world a little, too, about the strange phenomenon of the Jesuit Kircher, in whom Popery attempted to recover the very ground which Behmen and the Protestant nature-mystics were conquering from them.

old Bossuet, than they are likely to find elsewhere in the same compass.

Following chronological order as nearly as he can, he next passes to George Fox and the early Quakers, introducing a curious—and in our own case quite novel—little episode concerning 'The History of Hai Ebn Yokhdan,' a mediæval Arabian romance, which old Barclay seems to have got hold of and pressed into the service of his sect, taking it for literal truth.

The twelfth book is devoted to Swedenborg, and a very valuable little sketch it is, and one which goes far to clear up the moral character, and the reputation for sanity also, of that much calumniated philosopher, whom the world knows only as a dreaming false prophet, forgetting that even if he was that, he was also a sound and severe scientific labourer, to whom our modern physical science is most deeply indebted.

This is a short sketch of the contents of a book which is a really valuable addition to English literature, and which is as interesting as it is instructive. But Mr. Vaughan must forgive us if we tell him frankly that he has not exhausted the subject; that he has hardly defined mysticism at all—at least, has defined it by its outward results, and that without classifying them; and that he has not grasped the central idea of the subject. There were more things in these same mystics than are dreamt of in his philosophy; and he has missed seeing them, because he has put himself rather in the attitude of a judge than of an inquirer.

He has not had respect and trust enough for the men and women of whom he writes; and is too much inclined to laugh at them, and treat them de haut en bas. He has trusted too much to his own great power of logical analysis, and his equally great power of illustration, and is therefore apt to mistake the being

able to put a man's thoughts into words for him, for the being really able to understand him. To understand any man, we have must have sympathy for him, even affection. No intellectual acuteness, no amount even of mere pity for his errors, will enable us to see the man from within, and put our own souls into the place of his soul. To do that, one must feel and confess within oneself the seed of the same errors which one reproves in him; one must have passed more or less through his temptations, doubts, hunger of heart and brain; and one cannot help questioning, as one reads Mr. Vaughan's book, whether he has really done this in the case of those of whom he writes. He should have remembered, too, how little any young man can have experienced of the terrible sorrows which branded into the hearts of these old devotees the truths to which they clung more than to life, while they too often warped their hearts into morbidity, and caused alike their folly and their wisdom. Gently indeed should we speak even of the dreams of some self-imagined 'Bride of Christ,' when we picture to ourselves the bitter agonies which must have been endured ere a human soul could develop so fantastically diseased a growth. 'She was only a hysterical nun.' Well, and what more tragical object, to those who will look patiently and lovingly at human nature, than a hysterical nun? She may have been driven into a convent by some disappointment in love. And has not disappointed affection been confessed, in all climes and ages, to enshroud its victim ever after in a sanctuary of reverent pity? If sorrow 'broke her brains,' as well as broke her heart, shall we do aught but love her the more for her capacity of love? Or she may have entered the convent, as thousands did, in girlish simplicity, to escape from a world she had not tried, before she had

discovered that the world could give her something which the convent could not. What more tragical than her discovery in herself of a capacity for love which could never be satisfied within that prison? And when that capacity began to vindicate itself in strange forms of disease, seemingly to her supernatural, often agonising, often degrading, and at the same time (strange contradiction) mixed itself up with her noblest thoughts, to ennoble them still more, and inspire her not only with a desire of physical self-torture, which would seem holy both in her own eyes and her priest's, but with a love for all that is fair and lofty, for self-devotion and self-sacrifice—shall we blame her—shall we even smile at her, if, after the dreadful question 'Is this the possession of a demon?' had alternated with 'Is this the inspiration of a god?' she settled down, as the only escape from madness and suicide, into the latter thought, and believed that she found in the ideal and perfect manhood of One whom she was told to revere and love as a God, and who had sacrificed his own life for her, a substitute for that merely human affection from which she was for ever debarred? Why blame her for not numbering that which was wanting, or making straight that which was crooked? Let God judge her, not we: and the fit critics of her conduct are not the easy gentleman-like scholars, like Mr. Vaughan's Athertons and Gowers, discussing the 'aberrations of fanaticism' over wine and walnuts; or the gay girl, Kate; hardly even the happy mother, Mrs. Atherton: but those whose hairs are grey with sorrow; who have been softened at once and hardened in the fire of God; who have cried out of the bottomless deep like David, while lover and friend were hid away from them, and they laid amid the corpses of their dead hopes, dead health, dead joy, as on a ghastly battle-field, 'stript among the dead, like those

who are wounded, and cut away from God's hands;' who have struggled drowning in the horrible mire of doubt, and have felt all God's billows and waves sweep over them, till they were weary of crying, and their sight failed for waiting so long upon God; and all the faith and prayer which was left was, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.' Be it understood however, for fear of any mistake, that we hold Mr. Vaughan to be simply and altogether right in his main idea. His one test for all these people, and all which they said or did, is—Were they made practically better men and women thereby? He sees clearly that the 'spiritual' is none other than the 'moral'—that which has to do with right and wrong; and he has a righteous contempt for everything and anything, however graceful and reverent, and artistic and devout, and celestial and super-celestial, except in as far as he finds it making better men and women do better work at every-day life.

But even on this ground we must protest against such a sketch as this, even of one of the least honourable of the middle-age saints:—

ATHERTON. Angela de Foligni, who made herself miserable—I must say something the converse of flourished—about the beginning of the fourteenth century, was a fine model pupil of this sort, a genuine daughter of St. Francis. Her mother, her husband, her children dead, she is alone and sorrowful. She betakes herself to violent devotion—falls ill—suffers incessant anguish from a complication of disorders—has rapturous consolations and terrific temptations—is dashed in a moment from a seat of glory above the empyrean . . .

Very amusing, is it not? To have one's mother, husband, children die—the most commonplace sort of things—what (over one's wine and walnuts) one describes as being 'alone and sorrowful.' Men who having tasted the blessings conveyed in those few words, have also found the horror conveyed in them, have

no epithets for the state of mind in which such a fate would leave them. They simply pray that if that hour came, they might just have faith enough left not to curse God and die. Amusing, too, her falling ill, and suffering under a complication of disorders, especially if those disorders were the fruit of combined grief and widowhood. Amusing also her betaking herself to violent devotion. In the first place, if devotion be a good thing, could she have too much of it? If it be the way to make people good (as is commonly held by all Christian sects), could she become too good? The more important question which springs out of the fact, we will ask presently. 'She has rapturous consolations and terrific temptations.' Did the consolations come first, and that the temptations were a revulsion from 'spiritual' exaltation into 'spiritual' collapse and melancholy, or did the temptations come first, and the consolations come after to save her from madness and despair? Either may be the case; perhaps both were: but somewhat more of care should have been taken in expressing so important a spiritual sequence as either case exhibits.

It is twelve years and more since we studied the history of the 'B. Angela de Foligni,' and many another kindred saint; and we cannot recollect what were the terrific temptations, what was the floor of hell which the poor thing saw yawning beneath her feet. But we must ask Mr. Vaughan, has he ever read Boccaccio, or any of the Italian novelists up to the seventeenth century? And if so, can he not understand how Angela de Foligni, the lovely Italian widow of the fourteenth century, had her terrific temptations, to which, if she had yielded, she might have fallen to the lowest pit of hell, let that word mean what it may; and temptations all the more terrific because she saw

every widow round her considering them no temptations at all, but yielding to them, going out to invite them in the most business-like, nay, duty-like, way? What if she had 'rapturous consolations?' What if she did pour out to One who was worthy not of less but of more affection than she offered in her passionate southern heart, in language which in our colder northerns would be mere hypocrisy, yet which she had been taught to believe lawful by that interpretation of the Canticles which (be it always remembered) is common to Evangelicals and to Romanists? What if even, in reward for her righteous belief, that what she saw all widows round her doing, was abominable and to be avoided at all risks, she were permitted to enjoy a passionate affection, which after all was not misplaced? There are mysteries in religion as in all things, where it is better not to intrude behind the veil. Wisdom is justified of all her children: and folly may be justified of some of her children also.

Equally unfair it seems to us, is the notice of St. Brigitta,—in our eyes a beautiful and noble figure. A widow she, too—and what worlds of sorrow are there in that word, especially when applied to the pure deep-hearted Northern woman, as she was,—she leaves her Scandinavian pine-forests to worship and to give wherever she can, till she arrives at Rome, the centre of the universe, the seat of Christ's vicegerent, the city of God, the gate of Paradise. Thousands of weary miles she travels, through danger and sorrow—and when she finds it, behold, it is a lie and a sham; not the gate of Paradise, but the gate of Sodom and of hell. Was not that enough to madden her, if mad she became? What matter after that her 'angel dictated discourses on the Blessed Virgin,' 'bombastic invocations to the Saviour's eyes, ears, hair?'—they were at least the best objects

of worship which the age gave her. In one thing she was right, and kept her first love. 'What was not quite so bad, she gives to the world a series of revelations, in which the vices of popes and prelates are lashed unsparingly, and threatened with speedy judgment.' Not quite so bad? To us the whole phenomenon wears an utterly different aspect. At the risk of her life, at the risk of being burned alive—did any one ever consider what that means?—the noble Norsewoman, like an Alruna maid of old, hurls out her divine hereditary hatred of sin and filth and lies. At last she falls back on Christ himself as the only home for a homeless soul in such an evil time. And she is not burnt alive. The hand of One mightier than she is over her, and she is safe under the shadow of His wings, till her weary work is done and she goes home, her righteousness accepted for His sake: her folly, hysterics, dreams—call them by what base name we will—forgiven and forgotten for the sake of her many sorrows, and her faithfulness to the end.

But whatever fault we may find with these sketches, we can find none with Mr. Vaughan's reflections on them:—

> What a condemning comment on the pretended tender mercies of the Church are those narratives which Rome delights to parade of the sufferings, mental and bodily, which her devotees were instructed to inflict upon themselves! I am reminded of the thirsting mule, which has, in some countries, to strike with his hoof among the spines of the cactus, and drink, with lamed foot and bleeding lips, the few drops of milk which ooze from the broken thorns. Affectionate suffering natures came to Rome for comfort; but her scanty kindness is only to be drawn with anguish from the cruel sharpness of asceticism. The worldly, the audacious, escape easily; but these pliant, excitable temperaments, so anxiously in earnest, may be made useful. The more dangerous, frightful, or unnatural their performances, the more profit for their keepers. Men and women are trained by torturing processes to deny their nature, and then they are exhibited to bring grist to the mill—like birds and beasts forced to postures and services against the laws of their being—like those

who must perform perilous feats on ropes or with lions, nightly hazarding their lives to fill the pockets of a manager. The self-devotion of which Rome boasts so much is a self-devotion she has always thus made the most of for herself. Calculating men, who have thought only of the interest of the priesthood, have known well how best to stimulate and to display the spasmodic movements of a brainsick disinterestedness. I have not the shadow of a doubt that, once and again, some priest might have been seen, with cold grey eye, endeavouring to do a stroke of diplomacy by means of the enthusiastic Catharine, making the fancied ambassadress of heaven in reality the tool of a schemer. Such unquestionable virtues as these visionaries may some of them have possessed, cannot be fairly set down to the credit of the Church, which has used them all for mercenary or ambitious purposes, and infected them everywhere with a morbid character. Some of these mystics, floating down the great ecclesiastical current of the Middle Age, appear to me like the trees carried away by the inundation of some mighty tropical river. They drift along the stream, passive, lifeless, broken; yet they are covered with gay verdure, the aquatic plants hang and twine about the sodden timber and the draggled leaves, the trunk is a sailing garden of flowers. But the adornment is not that of nature—it is the decoration of another and a strange element; the roots are in the air; the boughs, which should be full of birds, are in the flood, covered by its alien products, swimming side by side with the alligator. So has this priestcraft swept its victims from their natural place and independent growth, to clothe them, in their helplessness, with a false spiritual adornment, neither scriptural nor human, but ecclesiastical—the native product of that overwhelming superstition which has subverted and enslaved their nature. The Church of Rome takes care that while simple souls think they are cultivating Christian graces, they shall be forging their own chains; that their attempts to honour God shall always dishonour, because they disenfranchise themselves. To be humble, to be obedient, to be charitable, under such direction, is to be contentedly ignorant, pitiably abject, and notoriously swindled.

Mr. Vaughan cannot be too severe upon the Romish priesthood. But it is one thing to dismiss with summary contempt men, who, as they do, keep the keys of knowledge, and neither enter in themselves nor suffer others to enter, and quite another thing to apply the same summary jurisdiction to men who, under whatsoever confusions, are feeling earnestly and honestly after truth. And therefore we regret exceedingly the mock trial which he has introduced into his Introduction. We regret it for his own sake; for it will drive away

from the book—indeed, it has driven—thoughtful and reverent people who, having a strong though vague inclination toward the mystics, might be very profitably taught by the after pages to separate the evil from the good in the Bernards and Guyons whom they admire, they scarce know why; and will shock, too, scholars to whom Hindoo and Persian thoughts on these subjects are matters not of ridicule, but of solemn and earnest investigation.

Besides, the question is not so easily settled. Putting aside the flippancy of the passage, it involves something very like a petitio principii to ask offhand, 'Does the man mean a living union of heart to Christ, a spiritual fellowship or converse with the Father, when he talks of the union of the believer with God—participation in the Divine nature?' For first, what we want to know is, the meaning of the words—what means 'living?' what 'union?' what 'heart?' They are terms common to the mystic and to the popular religionist, only differently interpreted; and in the meanings attributed to them lies nothing less than the whole world-old dispute between Nominalist and Realist; not yet to be settled in two lines by two gentlemen over their wine, much less ignored as a thing settled beyond all dispute already. If by 'living union of heart with'—Mr. Vaughan meant 'identity of morals with'—he should have said so: but he should have borne in mind that all the great Evangelicals have meant much more than this by those words; that on the whole, instead of considering—as he seems to do, and we do—the moral and the spiritual as identical, they have put them in antithesis to each other, and looked down upon 'mere morality' just because it did not seem to them to involve that supernatural, transcendental, 'mystic' element which they considered that they found in Scrip-

ture. From Luther to Owen and Baxter, from them to Wesley, Ceeil, and Venn, Newton, Bridges, the great Evangelieal authorities would (not very elearly or consistently, for they were but poor metaphysieians, but honestly and earnestly) have aeeepted some modified form of the mystie's theory, even to the 'discerning in partieular thoughts, frames, impulses, and inward witnessings, immediate eommunieations from heaven.' Surely Mr. Vaughan must be aware that the majority of 'vital Christians' on this ground are among his mystie offenders; and that those who deny sueh possibilities are but too liable to be stigmatized as 'Pelagians,' and 'Rationalists.' His friend Atherton is bound to show cause why those names are not to be applied to him, as he is bound to show what he means by 'living union with Christ,' and why he complains of the mystie for desiring 'participation in the Divine nature.' If he does so, he only desires what the New Testament formally, and word for word, promises him; whatsoever be the meaning of the term, he is not to be blamed for using it. Mr. Vaughan eannot have forgotten the many expressions, both of St. Paul and St. John, whieh do at first sight go far to justify the mystic, though they are but seldom heard, and more seldom boldly eommented on, in modern pulpits,—of Christ being formed in men, dwelling in men; of God dwelling in man and man in God; of Christ being the life of men, of men living, and moving, and having their being in God; and many another passage. If these be mere metaphors, let the faet be stated, with due reasons for it. But there is no sin or shame in interpreting them in that literal and realist sense in whieh they seem at first sight to have been written. The first duty of a seholar who sets before himself to investigate the phenomena of 'mystieism,' so ealled, should be to

answer these questions: Can there be a direct communication, above and beyond sense or consciousness, between the human spirit and God the Spirit? And if so, what are its conditions, where its limits, to transcend which is to fall into 'mysticism?'

And it is just this which Mr. Vaughan fails in doing. In his sketch, for instance, of the mysticism of India, he gives us a very clear and (save in two points) sound summary of that 'round of notions, occurring to minds of similar make under similar circumstances,' which is 'common to mystics in ancient India and in modern Christendom.'

> Summarily, I would say, this Hindoo mysticism:—
> (1.) Lays claim to disinterested love as opposed to a mercenary religion;
> (2.) Reacts against the ceremonial prescription and pedantic literalism of the Vedas;
> (3.) Identifies, in its pantheism, subject and object, worshipper and worshipped;
> (4.) Aims at ultimate absorption in the Infinite;
> (5.) Inculcates, as the way to this dissolution, absolute passivity, withdrawal into the inmost self, cessation of all the powers,—giving recipes for procuring this beatific torpor or trance;
> (6.) Believes that eternity may thus be realized in time;
> (7.) Has its mythical miraculous pretensions, *i.e.*, its theurgic department;
> (8.) And, finally, advises the learner in this kind of religion, to submit himself implicitly to a spiritual guide,—his Guru.

Against the two latter articles we except. The theurgic department of mysticism—unfortunately but too common—seems to us always to have been (as it certainly was in Neo-platonism) the despairing return to that ceremonialism which it had begun by shaking off, when it was disappointed in reaching its high aim by its proper method. The use of the Guru, or Father Confessor (which Mr. Vaughan confesses to be inconsistent with mysticism), is to be explained in the same way; he is a last refuge after disappointment.

But as for the first six counts. Is the Hindoo mystic a worse or a better man for holding them? Are they on the whole right or wrong? Is not disinterested love nobler than a mercenary religion? Is it not right to protest against ceremonial prescriptions, and to say, with the later prophets and psalmists of the Jews, 'Thinkest thou that He will eat bull's flesh, and drink the blood of goats. Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not. . . . I come to do thy will, O God!' What is, even, if he will look calmly into it, the 'pantheistic identification of subject and object, worshipper and worshipped,' but the clumsy yet honest effort of the human mind to say to itself, 'Doing God's will is the real end and aim of man?' The Yogi looks round upon his fellow men, and sees that all their misery and shame come from self-will; he looks within, and finds that all which makes him miserable, angry, lustful, greedy after this and that, comes from the same self-will. And he asks himself, How shall I escape from this torment of self?—how shall I tame my wayward will, till it shall become one with the harmonious, beautiful, and absolute Will which made all things? At least, I will try to do it, whatever it shall cost me. I will give up all for which men live—wife and child, the sights, scents, sounds of this fair earth, all things, whatever they be, which men call enjoyment; I will make this life one long torture, if need be: but this rebel will of mine I will conquer. I ask for no reward. That may come in some future life. But what care I. I am now miserable by reason of the lusts which war in my members; the peace which I shall gain in being freed from them will be its own reward. After all I give up little. All these things round me — the primæval forest, and the sacred stream of Ganga, the mighty Himalaya, mount of God, ay, the illimitable

vault of heaven above me, sun and stars—what are they but 'such stuff as dreams are made of?' Brahm thought, and they became something and somewhere. He may think again, and they will become nothing and nowhere. Are these eternal, greater than I, worth troubling my mind about? Nothing is eternal, but the Thought which made them, and will unmake them. They are only venerable in my eyes, because each of them is a thought of Brahm's. And I, too, have thought; I alone of all the kinds of living things. Am I not, then, akin to God? what better for me than to sit down and think, as Brahm thinks, and so enjoy my eternal heritage, leaving for those who cannot think, the passions and pleasures which they share in common with the beasts of the field? So I shall become more and more like Brahm; will his will, think his thoughts, till I lose utterly this house-fiend of self, and become one with God?

Is this a man to be despised? Is he a sickly dreamer, or a too valiant hero? and if any one be shocked at this last utterance, let him consider carefully the words which he may hear on Sunday; 'Then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.' That belief is surely not a false one. Shall we abhor the Yogi because he has seen, sitting alone there amid idolatry and licentiousness, despotism and priestcraft, that the ideal goal of man is what we confess it to be in the communion service? Shall we not rather wonder and rejoice over the magnificent utterances in that Bhagavat-Gita which Mr. Vaughan takes for the text book of Hindoo mysticism, where Crishna, the teacher human, and yet God himself, speaks thus—

There is nothing greater than I; all things hang on me, as precious gems upon a string. . . . I am life in all things, and zeal in the

zealous. I am the eternal seed of nature: I am the understanding of the wise, the glory of the proud, the strength of the strong, free from lust and anger. . . . Those who trust in me know Brahm, the supreme and incorruptible. . . . In this body I am the teacher of worship. He who thinks of me will find me. He who finds me returns not again to mortal birth. . . . I am the sacrifice, I am the worship, I am the incense, I am the fire, I am the victim, I am the father and mother of the world; I am the road of the good, the comforter, the creator, the witness, the asylum, and the friend. They who serve other gods with a firm belief, involuntarily worship me. I am the same to all mankind. They who serve me in adoration are in me. If one whose ways are ever so evil serve me alone, he becometh of a virtuous spirit and obtaineth eternal happiness. Even women, and the tribes of Visya and Soodra, shall go the supreme journey, if they take sanctuary with me; how much more my holy servants the Brahmins and the Ragarshees! Consider this world as a finite and joyless place, and serve me.

There may be confused words scattered up and down here; there are still more confused words—not immoral ones—round them, which we have omitted; but we ask, once and for all, is this true, or is it not? Is there a being who answers to this description, or is there not? And if there be, was it not a light price to pay for the discovery of him 'to sit upon the sacred grass called koos, with his mind fixed on one object alone; keeping his head, neck, and body steady, without motion; his eyes fixed upon the point of his nose, looking at no other place around'—or any other simple, even childish, practical means of getting rid of the disturbing bustle and noise of the outward time-world, that he might see the eternal world which underlies it? What if the discovery be imperfect, the figure in many features erroneous? Is not the wonder to us, the honour to him, that the figure should be there at all? Inexplicable to us on any ground, save that one common to the Bhagavat-Gita, to the gospel. 'He who seeks me shall find me.' What if he knew but in part, and saw through a glass darkly? Was there not an inspired apostle, who could but say the very same

thing of himself, and look forward to a future life in which he would 'know even as he was known?'

It is well worth observing, too, that so far from the moral of this Bhagavat-Gita issuing in mere contemplative Quietism, its purpose is essentially practical. It arises out of Arjoun's doubt whether he shall join in the battle which he sees raging below him; it results in his being commanded to join in it, and fight like a man. We cannot see, as Mr. Vaughan does, an 'unholy indifference' in the moral. Arjoun shrinks from fighting because friends and relatives are engaged on both sides, and he dreads hell if he kills one of them. The answer to his doubt is, after all, the only one which makes war permissible to a Christian, who looks on all men as his brothers:—

'You are a Ksahtree, a soldier; your duty is to fight. Do your duty, and leave the consequences of it to Him who commanded the duty. You cannot kill these men's souls any more than they can yours. You can only kill their mortal bodies; the fate of their souls and yours depends on their moral state. Kill their bodies, then, if it be your duty, instead of tormenting yourself with scruples, which are not really scruples of conscience, only selfish fears of harm to yourself, and leave their souls to the care of Him who made them, and knows them, and cares more for them than you do.'

This seems to be the plain outcome of the teaching. What is it, mutatis mutandis, but the sermon, 'cold-blooded' or not, which every righteous soldier has to preach to himself, day by day, as long as his duty commands him to kill his human brothers?

Yet the fact is undeniable that Hindoo mysticism has failed of practical result—that it has died down into brutal fakecrism. We look in vain, however, in

Mr. Vaughan's chapter for an explanation of this fact, save his assertion, which we deny, that Hindoo mysticism was in essence and at its root wrong and rotten. Mr. Maurice ('Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy,' p. 46) seems to point to a more charitable solution. 'The Hindoo' (he says) 'whatsoever vast discovery he may have made at an early period of a mysterious Teacher near him, working on his spirit, who is at the same time Lord over nature, began the search from himself—he had no other point from whence to begin—and therefore it ended in himself. The purification of his individual soul became practically his highest conceivable end; to carry out that he must separate from society. Yet the more he tries to escape self the more he finds self; for what are his thoughts about Brahm, his thoughts about Krishna, save his own thoughts? Is Brahm a projection of his own soul? To sink in him, does it mean to be nothing? Am I, after all, my own law? And hence the downward career into stupid indifferentism, even into Antinomian profligacy.'

The Hebrew, on the other hand, begins from the belief of an objective external God, but one who cares for more than his individual soul; as one who is the everpresent guide, and teacher, and ruler of his whole nation; who regards that nation as a whole, a one person, and that not merely one present generation, but all, past or future, as a one 'Israel;' lawgivers, prophets, priests, warriors. All classes are his ministers. He is essentially a political deity, who cares infinitely for the polity of a nation, and therefore bestows one upon them—'a law of Jehovah.' Gradually, under this teaching, the Hebrew rises to the very idea of an inward teacher, which the Yogi had, and to a far purer and clearer form of that idea; but

he is not tempted by it to selfish individualism, or contemplative isolation, as long as he is true to the old Mosaic belief, that this being is the Political Deity, 'the King of Kings.' The Pharisee becomes a selfish individualist just because he has forgotten this; the Essene, a selfish 'mystic' for the same reason; Philo and the Jewish mystics of Alexandria lose in like manner all notion that Jehovah is the lawgiver, and ruler, and archetype of family and of national life. Christianity retained the idea; it brought out the meaning of the old Jewish polity in its highest form; for that very reason it was able to bring out the meaning of the 'mystic' idea in its highest form also, without injury to men's work as members of families, as citizens, as practical men of the world; and so to conquer at last that Manichæan hatred of marriage and parentage, which from the first to the sixteenth century shed its Upas shade over the church.

And here let us say boldly to Mr. Vaughan and to our readers—As long as 'the salvation of a man's own soul' is set forth in all pulpits as the first and last end and aim of mortal existence; as long as Christianity is dwelt on merely as influencing individuals each apart —as 'brands plucked, one here and another there, from the general burning,'—so long will mysticism, in its highest form, be the refuge of the strongest spirits, and in its more base and diseased forms the refuge of the weak and sentimental spirits. They will say, each in his own way—'You confess that there can be a direct relation, communion, inspiration, from God to my soul, as I sit alone in my chamber. You do not think that there is such between God and what you call the world; between Him and nations as wholes,—families, churches, schools of thought, as wholes; that He does not take a special interest, or exercise a special

influence, over the ways and works of men—over science, commerce, civilization, colonization, all which affects the earthly destinies of the race. All these you call secular; to admit His influence over them for their own sake (though of course He overrules them for the sake of his elect) savours of Pantheism. Is it so? Then we will give up the world. We will cling to the one fact which you confess to be certain about us, that we can take refuge in God, each in the loneliness of his chamber, from all the vain turmoil of a race which is hastening heedless into endless misery. You may call us mystics, or what you will. We will possess our souls in patience, and turn away our eyes from vanity. We will commune with our own hearts in solitude, and be still. We will not even mingle in your religious world, the world which you have invented for yourselves, after denying that God's human world is sacred; for it seems to us as full of intrigue, ambition, party-spirit, falsehood, bitterness, and ignorance, as the political world, or the fashionable world, or the scientific world; and we will have none of it. Leave us alone with God.'

This has been the true reason of mystical isolation in every age and country. So thought Macarius and the Christian fakeers of the Thebaid. So thought the mediæval monks and nuns. So thought the German Quietists when they revolted from the fierce degradation of decaying Lutheranism. So are hundreds thinking now; so may thousands think ere long. If the individualizing phase of Christianity which is now dominant shall long retain its ascendancy, and the creed of Dr. Cumming and Mr. Spurgeon become that of the British people, our purest and noblest spirits will act here, with regard to religion, as the purest and noblest in America have acted with regard to politics. They

will withdraw each into the sanctuary of his own heart, and leave the battle-field to rival demagogues. They will do wrong, it may be. Isolation involves laziness, pride, cowardice; but if sober England, during the next half-century, should be astonished by an outburst of mysticism, as grand in some respects, as fantastic in others, as that of the thirteenth or the seventeenth centuries, the blame, if blame there be, will lie with those leaders of the public conscience who, after having debased alike the Church of England and the dissenting sects with a selfish individualism which was as foreign to the old Cromwellite Ironside as to the High Church divine, have tried to debar their disciples from that peaceful and graceful mysticism which is the only excusable or tolerable form of religion beginning and ending in self.

Let it be always borne in mind, that Quakerism was not a protest against, or a revulsion from, the Church of England, but from Calvinism. The steeple-houses, against which George Fox testified, were not served by Henry Mores, Cudworths, or Norrises: not even by dogmatist High-Churchmen, but by Calvinist ministers, who had ejected them. George Fox developed his own scheme, such as it was, because the popular Protestantism of his day failed to meet the deepest wants of his heart; because, as he used to say, it gave him 'a dead Christ,' and he required a 'living Christ.' Doctrines about who Christ is, he held, are not Christ himself. Doctrines about what he has done for man, are not He himself. Fox held, that if Christ be a living person, He must act (when he acted) directly on the most inward and central personality of him, George Fox; and his desire was satisfied by the discovery of the indwelling Logos, or rather by its re-discovery, after it had fallen into oblivion for centuries. Whe-

ther he were right or wrong, he is a fresh instance of a man's arriving, alone and unassisted, at the same idea at which mystics of all ages and countries have arrived; a fresh corroboration of our belief, that there must be some reality corresponding to a notion which has manifested itself so variously, and among so many thousands of every creed, and has yet arrived, by whatsoever different paths, at one and the same result.

That he was more or less right—that there is nothing in the essence of mysticism contrary to practical morality, Mr. Vaughan himself fully confesses. In his fair and liberal chapters on Fox and the Early Quakers, he does full justice to their intense practical benevolence; to the important fact that Fox only lived to do good, of any and every kind, as often as a sorrow to be soothed, or an evil to be remedied, crossed his path. We only wish that he had also brought in the curious and affecting account of Fox's interview with Cromwell, in which he tells us (and we will take Fox's word against any man) that the Protector gave him to understand, almost with tears, that there was that in Fox's faith which he was seeking in vain from the 'ministers' around him.

All we ask of Mr Vaughan is, not to be afraid of his own evident liking for Fox; of his own evident liking for Tauler and his school; not to put aside the question which their doctrines involve, with such half-utterances as—

> The Quakers are wrong, I think, in separating particular movements and monitions as Divine. But, at the same time, the 'witness of the Spirit,' as regards our state before God, is something more, I believe, than the mere attestation to the written word.

As for the former of these two sentences, he may be quite right, for aught we know. But it must be said, on the other hand, that not merely Quakers, but decent

men of every creed and age, have—we may dare to say, in proportion to their devoutness—believed in such monitions; and that it is hard to see how any man could have arrived at the belief that a living person was working on him, and not a mere unpersonal principle, law, or afflatus—(spirit of the universe, or other metaphor for hiding materialism)—unless by believing, rightly or wrongly, in such monitions. For our only inductive conception of a living person demands that that person shall make himself felt by separate acts.

But against the second sentence we must protest. The question in hand is not whether this 'witness of the Spirit' is 'something more' than anything else. But whether it exists at all, and what it is. Why was the book written, save to help toward the solution of this very matter? The question all through has been —Can an immediate influence be exercised by the Spirit of God on the spirit of man? Mr. Vaughan assents, and says (we cannot see why) that there is no mysticism in such a belief. Be that as it may, what that influence is, and how exercised, is all through the de quo agitur of mysticism. Mr. Vaughan, however, seems here for awhile to be talking realism through an admirable page, well worth perusal (pp. 264–5). Yet his grasp is not sure. We soon find him saying what More and Fox would alike deny, that 'The story of Christ's life and death is our soul's food.' No; Christ himself is—would the Catholic Church and the mystic alike answer. And here again, the whole matter in dispute is (unconsciously to Mr. Vaughan) opened up in one word. And if this sentence does not bear directly on that problem, on what does it bear? It was therefore with extreme disappointment that on reading this, and saying to ourselves, 'Now we shall hear at last what Mr. Vaughan himself thinks on the matter,'

we found that he literally turned the subject off, as if not worth investigation, by making the next speaker answer, à propos of nothing, that 'the traditional asceticism of the Friends is their fatal defect as a body.'

Why, too, has Mr. Vaughan devoted a few lines only to the great English Platonists, More, Norris, Smith of Jesus, Gale, and Cudworth? He says, indeed, that they are scarcely mystics, except in as far as Platonism is always in a measure mystical. In our sense of the word they were all of them mystics, and of a very lofty type; but surely Henry More is a mystic in Mr. Vaughan's sense also. If the author of Conjectura Cabbalistica be not a mystical writer (he himself uses the term without shame), who is?

We hope to see much in this book condensed, much modified, much worked out, instead of being left fragmentary and embryotic; but whether our hope be fulfilled or not, a useful and honourable future is before the man who could write such a book as this is, in spite of all defects.

* * * * *

Since the above was written, Mr. Vaughan's premature death has robbed us of a man who might have done brave work, by lessening, through his own learning, the intellectual gulf which now exists between English Churchmen and Dissenters. Dîs aliter visum. But Mr. Vaughan's death does not, I think, render it necessary for me to alter any of the opinions expressed here; and least of all that in the last sentence, fulfilled now more perfectly than I could have foreseen.

BURNS AND HIS SCHOOL.*

FOUR faces among the portraits of modern men, great or small, strike us as supremely beautiful; not merely in expression, but in the form and proportion and harmony of features: Shakspeare, Raffaelle, Goethe, Burns. One would expect it to be so; for the mind makes the body, not the body the mind; and the inward beauty seldom fails to express itself in the outward, as a visible sign of the invisible grace or disgrace of the wearer. Not that it is so always. A Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles, may be ordained to be 'in presence weak, in speech contemptible,' hampered by some thorn in the flesh—to interfere apparently with the success of his mission, perhaps for the same wise purpose of Providence which sent Socrates to the Athenians, the worshippers of physical beauty, in the ugliest of human bodies, that they, or rather those of them to whom eyes to see had been given, might learn that soul is after all independent of matter, and not its creature and its slave. But, in the generality of cases,

* North British Review, No. XXXI.—1. 'Elliott's Poems.' London, 1833.—2. Poems of Robert Nicoll. Third Edition. Edinburgh, 1843.—3. 'Life and Poems of John Bethune.' London, 1841.—4. 'Memoirs of Alexander Bethune.' By W. M'Combie. Aberdeen, 1845.—5. 'Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver.' By William Thom, of Inverury. Second Edition. London, 1845.—6. 'The Purgatory of Suicides.' By Thomas Cooper. London, 1845.—7. 'The Book of Scottish Song.' By Alexander Whitelaw. Edinburgh, 1848.

physiognomy is a sound and faithful science, and tells us, if not, alas! what the man might have been, still what he has become. Yet even this former problem, what he might have been, may often be solved for us by youthful portraits, before sin and sorrow and weakness have had their will upon the features; and, therefore, when we spoke of these four beautiful faces, we alluded, in each case, to the earliest portraits of each genius which we could recollect. Placing them side by side, we must be allowed to demand for that of Robert Burns an honourable station among them. Of Shakspeare's we do not speak, for it seems to us to combine in itself the elements of all the other three; but of the rest, we question whether Burns's be not, after all, if not the noblest, still the most loveable—the most like what we should wish that of a teacher of men to be. Raffaelle—the most striking portrait of him, perhaps, is the full-face pencil sketch by his own hand in the Taylor Gallery at Oxford—though without a taint of littleness or effeminacy, is soft, melancholy, formed entirely to receive and to elaborate in silence. His is a face to be kissed, not worshipped. Goethe, even in his earliest portraits, looks as if his expression depended too much on his own will. There is a self-conscious power, and purpose, and self-restraint, and all but scorn, upon those glorious lineaments, which might win worship, and did; but not love, except as the child of enthusiasm or of relationship. But Burns's face, to judge of it by the early portrait of him by Nasmyth, must have been a face like that of Joseph of old, of whom the Rabbis relate, that he was mobbed by the Egyptian ladies whenever he walked the streets. The magic of that countenance, making Burns at once tempter and tempted, may explain many a sad story. The features certainly are not perfectly regular; there

is no superabundance of the charm of mere animal health in the outline or colour: but the marks of intellectual beauty in the face are of the highest order, capable of being but too triumphant among a people of deep thought and feeling. The lips, ripe, yet not coarse or loose, full of passion and the faculty of enjoyment, are parted, as if forced to speak by the inner fulness of the heart; the features are rounded, rich, and tender, and yet the bones show thought massively and manfully everywhere; the eyes laugh out upon you with boundless good humour and sweetness, with simple, eager, gentle surprise—a gleam as of the morning star, looking forth upon the wonder of a new-born world—altogether

> A station like the herald Mercury,
> New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill.

Bestow on such a man the wittiest and most winning eloquence—a rich flow of spirits and fulness of health and life—a deep sense of wonder and beauty in the earth and man—an instinct of the dynamic and supernatural laws which underlie and vivify this material universe and its appearances, healthy, yet irregular and unscientific, all but superstitious—turn him loose in any country in Europe, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and it will not be difficult, alas! to cast his horoscope.

And what an age in which to be turned loose!—for loose he must go, to solve the problem of existence for himself. The grand simple old Scottish education which he got from his parents must prove narrow and unsatisfying for so rich and manifold a character; not because it was in itself imperfect; not because it did not contain implicitly all things necessary for his 'salvation'—in every sense, all laws which he might require for his after-life guidance; but because it con-

tained so much of them as yet only implicitly; because it was not yet conscious of its own breadth and depth, and power of satisfying the new doubts and cravings of such minds and such times as Burns's. It may be that Burns was the devoted victim by whose fall it was to be taught that it must awaken and expand and renew its youth in shapes equally sound, but more complex and scientific. But it had not done so then. And when Burns found himself gradually growing beyond his father's teaching in one direction, and tempted beyond it in another and a lower one, what was there in those times to take up his education at the point where it had been left unfinished? He saw around him in plenty animal good-nature and courage, barbaric honesty and hospitality—more, perhaps, than he would see now; for the upward progress into civilized excellences is sure to be balanced by some loss of savage ones—but all reckless, shallow, above all, drunken. It was a hard-drinking, coarse, materialist age. The higher culture, of Scotland especially, was all but exclusively French—not a good kind, while Voltaire and Volney still remained unanswered, and 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses' were accepted by all young gentlemen, and a great many young ladies, who could read French, as the best account of the relation of the sexes.

Besides, the philosophy of that day, like its criticism, was altogether mechanical, nay, as it now seems, materialist in its ultimate and logical results. Criticism was outward, and of the form merely. The world was not believed to be already, and in itself, mysterious and supernatural, and the poet was not defined as the man who could see and proclaim that supernatural element. Before it was admired, it was to be raised above nature into the region of 'the picturesque,' or what not; and

the poet was the man who gave it this factitious and superinduced beauty, by a certain 'kompsologia' and 'meteoroepeia,' called 'poetic diction,' now happily becoming extinct, mainly, we believe, under the influence of Burns, although he himself thought it his duty to bedizen his verses therewith, and though it was destined to flourish for many a year more in the temple of the father of lies, like a jar of paper flowers on a Popish altar.

No wonder that in such a time, a genius like Burns should receive not only no guidance, but no finer appreciation. True; he was admired, petted, flattered; for that the man was wonderful, no one could doubt. But we question whether he was understood; whether, if that very flowery and magniloquent style which we now consider his great failing had been away, he would not have been passed over by the many as a writer of vulgar doggrel. True, the old simple ballad-muse of Scotland still dropped a gem from her treasures, here and there, even in the eighteenth century itself—witness Auld Robin Gray. But who suspected that they were gems, of which Scotland, fifty years afterwards, would be prouder and more greedy than of all the second-hand French culture which seemed to her then the highest earthly attainment? The review of Burns in an early number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' said to be from the pen of the late Lord Jeffrey, shows, as clearly as anything can, the utterly inconsistent and bewildered feeling with which the world must have regarded such a phenomenon. Alas! there was inconsistency and bewilderment enough in the phenomenon itself, but that only made confusion worse confounded; the confusion was already there, even in the mind of the more practical literary men, who ought, one would

have thought, also to have been the most deep-sighted. But no. The reviewer turns the strange thing over and over, and inside out—and some fifteen years after it has vanished out of the world, having said out its say and done all that it had to do, he still finds it too utterly abnormal to make up his mind about in any clear or consistent way, and gets thoroughly cross with it, and calls it hard names, because it will not fit into any established pigeon-hole or drawer of the then existing anthropological museum. Burns is 'a literary prodigy,' and yet it is 'a derogation' to him to consider him as one. And that we find, not as we should have expected, because he possessed genius which would have made success a matter of course in any rank, but because he was so well educated—'having acquired a competent knowledge of French, together with the elements of Latin and Geometry,' and before he had composed a single stanza, was 'far more intimately acquainted with Pope, Shakspeare, and Thomson, than nine-tenths of the youths who leave school for the University,' &c. &c.;—in short, because he was so well educated, that his becoming Robert Burns, the immortal poet, was a matter of course and necessity. And yet, a page or two on, the great reason why it was more easy for Robert Burns the cottar to become an original and vigorous poet, rather than for any one of 'the herd of scholars and academical literati,' who are depressed and discouraged by 'perusing the most celebrated writers, and conversing with the most intelligent judges,' is found to be, that 'the literature and refinement of the age do not exist for a rustic and illiterate individual; and consequently the present time is to him what the rude times of old were to the vigorous writers who adorned them.'—In short, the great reason of Robert Burns's success was that he did not

possess that education, the possession of which proves him to be no prodigy, though the review begins by calling him one, and coupling him with Stephen Duck and Thomas Dermody.

Now if the best critic of the age, writing fifteen years after Burns's death, found himself between the horns of such a dilemma—which indeed, like those of an old Arnee bull, meet at the points, and form a complete circle of contradictions—what must have been the bewilderment of lesser folk during the prodigy's very lifetime? what must, indeed, have been his own bewilderment at himself, however manfully he may have kept it down? No wonder that he was unguided, either by himself or by others. We do not blame them; him we must deeply blame; yet not as we ought to blame ourselves, did we yield in the least to those temptations under which Burns fell.

Biographies of Burns, and those good ones, according to the standard of biographies in these days, are said to exist: we cannot say that we have as yet cared to read them. There are several other biographies, even more important, to be read first, when they are written. Shakspeare has found as yet no biographer; has not even left behind him materials for a biography, such at least as are considered worth using. Indeed, we question whether such a biography would be of any use whatever to the world; for the man who cannot, by studying his dramas in some tolerably accurate chronological order, and using as a running accompaniment and closet commentary those awe-inspiring sonnets of his, attain to some clear notion of what sort of life William Shakspeare must have led, would not see him much the clearer for many folios of anecdote. For after all, the best biography of every sincere man is sure to be his own works; here he has set down,

'transferred as in a figure,' all that has happened to him, inward or outward, or rather, all which has formed him, produced a permanent effect upon his mind and heart; and knowing that, you know all you need know, and are content, being glad to escape the personality and gossip of names, and places, and of dates even, except in as far as they enable you to place one step of his mental growth before or after another. Of the honest man this holds true always; and almost always of the dishonest man, the man of cant, affectation, hypocrisy; for even if he pretend in his novel or his poem to be what he is not, he still shows you thereby what he thinks he ought to have been, or at least what he thinks that the world thinks he ought to have been, and confesses to you, in the most naïve and confidential way, like one who talks in his sleep, what learning he has or has not had; what society he has or has not seen, and that in the very act of trying to prove the contrary. Nay, the smaller the man or woman, and the less worth deciphering his biography, the more surely will he show you, if you have eyes to see and time to look, what sort of people offended him twenty years ago; what meanness he would have liked 'to indulge in,' if he had dared, when young, and for what other meanness he relinquished it, as he grew up; of what periodical he stood in awe when he took pen in hand, and so forth. Whether his books treat of love or political economy, theology or geology, it is there, the history of the man legibly printed, for those who care to read it. In these poems and letters of Burns, we apprehend, is to be found a truer history than any anecdote can supply, of the things which happened to himself, and moreover of the most notable things which went on in Scotland between 1759 and 1796.

This latter assertion may seem startling, when we

consider that we find in these poems no mention whatsoever of the discoveries of steam-boats and spinning-jennies, the rise of the great manufacturing cities, the revolution in Scottish agriculture, or even in Scottish metaphysics. But after all, the history of a nation is the history of the men, and not of the things thereof; and the history of those men is the history of their hearts, and not of their purses, or even of their heads; and the history of one man who has felt in himself the heart experiences of his generation, and anticipated many belonging to the next generation, is so far the collective history of that generation, and of much—no man can say how much—of the next generation; and such a man, bearing within his single soul two generations of working-men, we take Robert Burns to have been; and his poems, as such, a contemporaneous history of Scotland, the equal to which we are not likely to see written for this generation, or several to come.

Such a man sent out into such an age, would naturally have a hard and a confused battle to fight, would probably, unless he fell under the guidance of some master-mind, end se ipso minor, stunted and sadly deformed, as Burns did. His works are after all only the disjecta membra poetæ; full of hints of a great might-have-been.—Hints of the keenest and most dramatic appreciation of human action and thought.—Hints of an unbounded fancy, playing gracefully in the excess of its strength, with the vastest images, as in that robe of the Scottish muse, in which

> Deep lights and shades, bold mingling, threw
> A lustre grand,
> And seem'd to my astonished view
> A well-known land.

The image, and the next few stanzas which dilate it, might be a translation from Dante's 'Paradiso,' so broad,

terse, vivid, the painter's touch.—Hints, too, of a humour, which, like that of Shakspeare, rises at times by sheer depth of insight into the sublime; as when

> Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch
> Just like a winking baudrons.—

Hints of a power of verbal wit, which, had it been sharpened in such a perpetual word-battle as that amid which Shakspeare lived from the age of twenty, might have rivalled Shakspeare's own; which even now asserts its force by a hundred little never-to-be-forgotten phrases scattered through his poems, which stick, like barbed arrows, in the memory of every reader.—And as for his tenderness—the quality without which all other poetic excellence is barren—it gushes forth toward every creature, animate and inanimate, with one exception, namely, the hypocrite, ever alike 'spiacente a Dio e ai nemici sui;' and therefore intolerable to Robert Burns's honesty, whether he be fighting for or against the cause of right. Again we say, there are evidences of a versatile and manifold faculty in this man, which, with a stronger will and a larger education, might have placed him as an equal by the side of those great names which we mentioned together with his at the commencement of this Article.

But one thing Burns wanted; and of that one thing his age helped to deprive him,—the education which comes by reverence. Looking round in such a time, with his keen power of insight, his keen sense of humour, what was there to worship? Lord Jeffrey, or whosoever was the author of the review in the 'Edinburgh,' says disparagingly, that Burns had as much education as Shakspeare. So he very probably had, if education mean book-learning. Nay, more, of the practical education of the fireside, the sober, indus-

trious, God-fearing education, and 'drawing out' of the manhood, by act and example, Burns may have had more under his good father than Shakspeare under his; though the family life of the small English burgher in Elizabeth's time would have generally presented, as we suspect, the very same aspect of staid manfulness and godliness which a Scotch farmer's did fifty years ago. But let that be as it may, Burns was not born into an Elizabethan age. He did not see around him Raleighs and Sidneys, Cecils and Hookers, Drakes and Frobishers, Spensers and Jonsons, Southamptons and Willoughbys, with an Elizabeth, guiding and moulding the great whole, a crowned Titaness, terrible, and strong, and wise—a woman who, whether right or wrong, bowed the proudest, if not to love, yet still to obey.

That was the secret of Shakspeare's power. Heroic himself, he was born into an age of heroes. You see it in his works. Not a play but gives patent evidence that to him all forms of human magnanimity were common and way-side flowers—among the humours of men which he and Ben Jonson used to wander forth together to observe. And thus he could give living action and speech to the ancient noblenesses of Rome and the middle age; for he had walked and conversed with them, unchanged in everything but in the dress. Had he known Greek literature he could have recalled to imperishable life such men as Cimon and Aristides, such deeds as Marathon and Salamis. For had we not had our own Salamis acted within a few years of his birth; and were not the heroes of it still walking among men? It was surely this continual presence of 'men of worship,' this atmosphere of admiration and respect and trust, in which Shakspeare must have lived, which tamed down the wild self-will of the deer-stealing fugitive

from Stratford, into the calm large-eyed philosopher, tolerant and loving, and full of faith in a species made in the likeness of God. Not so with Burns. One feels painfully in his poems the want of great characters; and still more painfully that he has not drawn them, simply because they were not there to draw. That he has a true eye for what is noble, when he sees it, let his 'Lament for Glencairn' testify, and the stanzas in his 'Vision,' in which, with a high-bred grace which many a courtly poet of his day might have envied, he alludes to one and another Scottish worthy of his time. There is no vein of saucy and envious 'banausia' in the man; even in his most graceless sneer, his fault—if fault it be—is, that he cannot and will not pretend to respect that which he knows to be unworthy of respect. He sees around him and above him, as well as below him, an average of men and things dishonest, sensual, ungodly, shallow, ridiculous by reason of their own lusts and passions, and he will not apply to the shams of dignity and worth, the words which were meant for their realities. After all, he does but say what every one round him was feeling and thinking: but he said it; and hypocritical respectability shrank shrieking from the mirror of her own inner heart. But it was all the worse for him. In the sins of others he saw an excuse for his own. Losing respect for and faith in his brother men, he lost, as a matter of course, respect for himself, faith in himself. The hypocrisy which persecutes in the name of law, whether political or moral, while in private it transgresses the very law which is for ever on its tongue, is turned by his passionate and sorely-tempted character into a too easy excuse for disbelieving in the obligation of any law whatsoever. He ceases to worship, and therefore to be himself worshipful,—and we know the rest.

'He might have still worshipped God?' He might, and surely amid all his sins, doubts, and confusions, the remembrance of the old faith learned at his parent's knee, does haunt him still as a beautiful regret—and sometimes, in his bitterest hours, shine out before his poor broken heart as an everlasting Pharos, lighting him homewards after all. Whether he reached that home or not, none on earth can tell. But his writings show, if anything can, that the vestal-fire of conscience still burned within, though choked again and again with bitter ashes and foul smoke. Consider the time in which he lived, when it was 'as with the people, so with the priest,' and the grand old life-tree of the Scottish Kirk, now green and vigorous with fresh leaves and flowers, was all crusted with foul scurf and moss, and seemed to have ceased growing, and to be crumbling down into decay; consider the terrible contradiction between faith and practice which must have met the eyes of the man, before he could write with the same pen—and one as honestly as the other—'The Cottar's Saturday Night,' and 'Holy Willie's Prayer.' But those times are past, and the men who acted in them gone to another tribunal. Let the dead bury their dead: and, in the meantime, instead of cursing the misguided genius, let us consider whether we have not also something for which to thank him; whether, as competent judges of him aver from their own experience, those very seeming blasphemies of his have not produced more good than evil; whether, though 'a savour of death unto death,' to conceited and rebellious spirits, they may not have helped to open the eyes of the wise to the extent to which the general eighteenth century rottenness had infected Scotland, and to make intolerable a state of things which ought to have been intolerable, even if Burns had never written.

We are not attacking the reviewer, far less the 'Edinburgh Review,' which some years after this not only made the amende honorable to Burns, but showed a frank impartiality only too rare in the reviews of these days, by publishing in its pages the noble article on Burns which has since appeared separately in Mr. Carlyle's Miscellanies; we wish to show, from the reviewer's own words, the element in which Burns had to work, the judges before whom he had to plead, and the change which, as we think, very much by the influence of his own poems, has passed upon the minds of men. How few are there who would pen now about him such a sentence as this—'He is,' (that is, was, having gone to his account fifteen years before,) 'perpetually making a parade of his own inflammability and imprudence, and talking with much self-complacency and exultation of the offence he has occasioned to the sober and correct part of mankind,'—a very small part of mankind, one would have thought, in the British isles at least, about the end of the last century. But, it was the fashion then, as usual, to substitute the praise of virtues for the practice of them; and three-bottle and ten-tumbler men had a very good right, of course, to admire sobriety and correctness, and to denounce any two-bottle and six-tumbler man who was not ashamed to confess in print the weaknesses which they confessed only by word of mouth. Just, and yet not just. True, Burns does make a parade of his thoughtlessness, and worse:—but why? because he gloried in it? He must be a very skin-deep critic who cannot see, even in the most insolent of those blameworthy utterances, an inward shame and self-reproach, which if any man had ever felt in himself, he would be in nowise inclined to laugh at it in others. Why, it is the very shame which wrings those poems

out of him. They are the attempt of the strong man fettered to laugh at his own consciousness of slavery—to deny the existence of his chains—to pretend to himself that he likes them. To us, some of those wildest 'Rob the Ranter' bursts of blackguardism are most deeply mournful, hardly needing that the sympathies which they stir up should be heightened by the little scraps of prayer and bitter repentance, which lie up and down among their uglier brethren, the disjecta membra of a great 'De Profundis,' perhaps not all unheard. These latter pieces are most significant. The very doggrel of them, the total absence of any attempt at ornament in diction or polish in metre, is proof complete of their deep heart-wrung sincerity. They are like the wail of a lost child, rather than the remorse of a Titan. The heart of the man was so young to the last; the boy-vein in him, as perhaps in all great poets, beating on through manhood for good and for evil. No! there was parade there, as of the lost woman, who tries to hide her self-disgust by staring you out of countenance, but of complacency and exultation, none.

On one point, namely politics, Burns's higher sympathies seem to have been awakened. It had been better for him, in a worldly point of view, that they had not. In an intellectual, and even in a moral point of view, far worse. A fellow-feeling with the French Revolution, in the mind of a young man of that day, was a sign of moral health, which we should have been sorry to miss in him. Unable to foresee the outcome of the great struggle, having lost faith in those everlasting truths, religious and political, which it was madly setting at nought, what could it appear to him but an awakening from the dead, a return to young and genial health, a purifying thunder-storm. Such was his dream, the dream of thousands more, and not so

wrong a one after all. For that, since that fearful outburst of the nether pit, all Europe has arisen and awakened into manifold and beautiful new life, who can deny? We are not what we were, but better; or rather, with boundless means of being better if we will. We have entered a fresh era of time for good and evil; the fact is patent in every sermon we hear, in every book we read, in every invention, even the most paltry, which we see registered. Shall we think hardly of the man who saw the dawn of our own day, and welcomed it cheerfully and hopefully, even though he fancied the mist-spectres to be elements of the true sunrise, and knew not—and who knows?—the purposes of Him whose paths are in the great deep, and His ways past finding out? At least, the greater part of his influence on the times which have followed him, is to be ascribed to that very 'Radicalism' which in the eyes of the respectable around him, had sealed his doom, and consigned him to ignoble oblivion. It has been, with the working men who read him, a passport for the rest of his writings; it has allured them to listen to him, when he spoke of high and holy things, which but for him, they might have long ago tossed away as worthless, in the recklessness of ignorance and discontent. They could trust his 'Cottar's Saturday Night;' they could believe that he spoke from his heart, when in deep anguish he cries to the God whom he had forgotten, while they would have turned with a distrustful sneer from the sermon of the sleek and comfortable minister, who in their eyes, however humbly born, had deserted his class, and gone over to the camp of the enemy, and the flesh-pots of Egypt.

After the time of Burns, as was to be expected, Scottish song multiplies itself tenfold. The nation

becomes awakened to the treasures of its own old literature, and attempts, what after all, alas! is but a revival; and like most revivals, not altogether a successful one. Of the twelve hundred songs contained in Mr. Whitelaw's excellent collection, whereof more than a hundred and fifty are either wholly or partly Burns's, the small proportion written before him are decidedly far superior in value to those written after him; a discouraging fact, though not difficult to explain, if we consider the great social changes which have been proceeding, the sterner subjects of thought which have been arising, during the last half-century. True song requires for its atmosphere a state rather of careless Arcadian prosperity, than of struggle and doubt, of earnest looking forward to an unknown future, and pardonable regret for a dying past; and in that state the mind of the masses, throughout North-Britain, has been weltering confusedly for the last few years. The new and more complex era into which we are passing has not yet sufficiently opened itself to be sung about; men hardly know what it is, much less what it will be; and while they are hard at work creating it, they have no breath to spare in talking of it: one thing they do see and feel, painfully enough at times, namely, that the old Scottish pastoral life is passing away, before the combined influence of manufactures and the large-farm system, to be replaced, doubtless, hereafter by something better, but in the meanwhile dragging down with it in its decay but too much that can ill be spared of that old society which inspired Ramsay and Burns. Hence the later Scottish song writers seldom really sing; their proses want the unconscious lilt and flash of their old models; they will hardly go (the true test of a song) without music. The true test, we say again, of a song. Who needs music, however fitting and beautiful

the accustomed air may happen to be, to 'Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch,' or 'The Bride cam' out o' the byre,' or either of the casts of 'The Flowers of the Forest,' or to 'Auld Lang Syne' itself? They bubble right up out of the heart, and by virtue of their inner and unconscious melody, which all that is true to the heart has in it, shape themselves into a song, and are not shaped by any notes whatsoever. So with many, most indeed, of Burns's; and a few of Allan Cunningham's; the 'Wet sheet and a flowing sail,' for instance. But the great majority of these later songs seem, if the truth is to be spoken, inspirations at second hand, of people writing about things which they would like to feel, and which they ought to feel, because others used to feel them in old times; but which they do not feel as their forefathers felt;—a sort of poetical Tractarianism, in short. Their metre betrays them, as well as their words; in both they are continually wandering, unconsciously to themselves, into the elegiac—except when on one subject, whereon the muse of Scotia still warbles at first hand, and from the depths of her heart—namely, alas! the barley bree: and yet never, even on this beloved theme, has she risen again to the height of Burns's bacchanalian songs.

But when sober, there is a sadness about the Scottish muse now-adays—as perhaps there ought to be—and the utterances of hers which ring the truest are laments. We question whether in all Mr. Whitelaw's collection there is a single modern poem, (placing Burns as the transition point between the old and new,) which rises so high, or pierces so deep, with all its pastoral simplicity, as Smibert's 'Widow's Lament.'

Afore the Lammas tide
Had dwin'd the birken tree,
In a' our water side,
Nae wife was blest like me:

A kind gudeman, and twa
  Sweet bairns were round me here;
But they're a' ta'en awa',
  Sin' the fa' o' the year.

Sair trouble cam' our gate,
  And made me, when it cam',
A bird without a mate,
  A ewe without a lamb.
Our hay was yet to maw,
  And our corn was yet to shear;
When they a' dwined awa',
  In the fa' o' the year.

I daurna look a-field,
  For aye I trow to see,
The form that was a bield
  To my wee bairns and me;
But wind, and weet, and snaw,
  They never mair can fear,
Sin' they a' got the ca',
  In the fa' o' the year.

Aft on the hill at e'ens,
  I see him 'mang the ferns,
The lover o' my teens,
  The father o' my bairns:
For there his plaid I saw,
  As gloamin' aye drew near—
But my a's now awa',
  Sin' the fa' o' the year,

Our bonnie rigs theirsel',
  Reca' my waes to mind,
Our puir dumb beasties tell
  O' a' that I ha'e tyned;
For whae our wheat will saw,
  And whae our sheep will shear,
Sin' my a' gaed awa',
  In the fa' o' the year?

My heart is growing cauld,
  And will be caulder still,
And sair, sair in the fauld,
  Will be the winter's chill;
For peats were yet to ca',
  Our sheep they were to smear,
When my a' dwined awa',
  In the fa' o' the year.

I ettle whiles to spin,
  But wee wee patterin' feet,
Come rinnin' out and in,
  And then I first maun greet:

I ken its fancy a',
And faster rows the tear,
That my a' dwined awa',
In the fa' o' the year.

Be kind, O heav'n abune!
To ane sae wae and lane,
An' tak' her hamewards sune,
In pity o' her mane:
Lang ere the March winds blaw,
May she, far far frae here,
Meet them a' that's awa',
Sin' the fa' o' the year.

It seems strange why the man who could write this, who shows, in the minor key of metre, which he has so skilfully chosen, such an instinct for the true music of words, could not have written much more. And yet, perhaps, we have ourselves given the reason already. There was not much more to sing about. The fashion of imitating old Jacobite songs is past, the mine now being exhausted, to the great comfort of sincerity and common sense. The peasantry, whose courtships, rich in animal health, yet not over pure or refined, Allan Ramsay sung a hundred years ago, are learning to think, and act, and emigrate, as well as to make love. The age of Theocritus and Bion has given place to—shall we say the age of the Cæsars, or the irruption of the barbarians?—and the love-singers of the North are beginning to feel, that if that passion is to retain any longer its rightful place in their popular poetry, it must be spoken of henceforth in words as lofty and refined as those in which the most educated and the most gifted speak of it. Hence, in the transition between the old animalism and the new spiritualism, a jumble of the two elements, not always felicitous; attempts at ambitious description, after Burns's worst manner; at subjective sentiment, after the worst manner of the world in general; and yet, all the while, a consciousness that there was something worth keeping in

the simple objective style of the old school, without which the new thoughtfulness would be hollow, and barren, and windy; and so the two are patched together, 'new cloth into an old garment, making the rent worse.' Accordingly, these new songs are universally troubled with the disease of epithets. Ryan's exquisite 'Lass wi' the Bonny Blue Een,' is utterly spoiled by two offences of this kind.

> She'll steal out to meet her loved Donald again,

and—

> The world's false and vanishing scene;

as Allan Cunningham's still more exquisite 'Lass of Preston Mill' is by one subjective figure,—

> Six hills are woolly with my sheep,
> Six vales are lowing with my kye.

Burns doubtless committed the same fault again and again: but in his time it was the fashion; and the older models (for models they are and will remain for ever) had not been studied and analyzed as they have been since. Burns, indeed, actually spoiled one or two of his own songs by altering them from their first cast to suit the sentimental taste of his time. The first version, for instance, of the 'Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon,' is far superior to the second and more popular one, because it dares to go without epithets. Compare the second stanza of each:—

> Thou'lt break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
> That sings upon the bough;
> Thou minds me o' the happy days
> When my fause love was true.
> * * * * * *
> Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
> That wantons through the flowery thorn;
> Thou minds me o' departed joys,
> Departed never to return.

What is said in the latter stanza which has not been said in the former, and said more dramatically, more

as the images would really present themselves to the speaker's mind? It would be enough for him that the bird was bonnie, and singing; and his very sorrow would lead him to analyze and describe as little as possible a thing which so painfully contrasted with his own feelings; whether the thorn was flowery or not, would not have mattered to him, unless he had some distinct association with the thorn-flowers, in which case he would have brought out the image full and separate, and not merely thrown it in as a make-weight to 'thorn;'—and this is the great reason why epithets are, nine times out of ten, mistakes in song and ballad poetry, he never would have thought of 'departed' before he thought of 'joys.' A very little consideration of the actual processes of thought in such a case, will show the truth of our observation, and the instinctive wisdom of the older song-writers, in putting the epithet as often as possible after the noun, instead of before it, even at the expense of grammar. They are bad things at all times in song-poetry, these epithets; and, accordingly, we find that the best German writers, like Uhland and Heine, get rid of them as much as possible, and succeed thereby, every word striking and ringing down with full force, no cushion of an epithet intruding between the reader's brain-anvil and the poet's hammer to break the blow. In Uhland's 'Three Burschen,' if we recollect right, there are but two epithets, and those of the simplest descriptive kind—'Thy fair daughter' and a 'black pall.' Were there more, we question whether the poet would have succeeded, as he has done, in making our flesh creep as he leads us on from line to line and verse to verse. So Tennyson, the greatest of our living poets, eschews as much as possible, in his later writings, these same epithets, except in cases where they are themselves

objective and pictorial—in short, the very things which he wants you to look at, as, for instance,—

> And into silver arrows break
> The sailing moon in creek and cove.

This is fair enough; but, indeed, after laying down our rule, we must confess that it is very difficult to keep always true to it, in a language which does not, like the Latin and German, allow us to put our adjectives very much where we choose. Nevertheless, whether we can avoid it or not, every time we place before the noun an epithet which, like 'departed joys,' relates to our consciousnesses concerning the object, and not merely to the object itself; or an epithet which, like 'flowery thorn,' gives us, before we get to the object itself, those accidents of the object which we only discern by a second look, by analysis and reflection; (for the thorn, if in the flower, would look to us, at the first glance, not 'flowery,' but 'white,' 'snowy,' or what you will which expresses colour, and not scientific fact)—every time, we repeat, this is done, the poet descends from the objective and dramatic domain of song, into the subjective and reflective one of elegy.

But the field in which Burns's influence has been, as was to be expected, most important and most widely felt, is in the poems of working men. He first proved that it was possible to become a poet and a cultivated man, without deserting his class, either in station or in sympathies; nay, that the healthiest and noblest elements of a lowly born poet's mind might be, perhaps certainly must be, the very feelings and thoughts which he brought up with him from below, not those which he received from above, in the course of his artificial culture. From the example of Burns, therefore, many a working man, who would otherwise have 'died and given no sign,' has taken courage, and spoken out the

thought within him, in verse or prose, not always wisely and well, but in all cases, as it seems to us, in the belief that he had a sort of divine right to speak and be heard, since Burns had broken down the artificial ice-wall of centuries, and asserted, by act as well as song, that 'a man's a man for a' that.' Almost every volume of working men's poetry which we have read, seems to re-echo poor Nicoll's spirited, though somewhat over-strained address to the Scottish genius :—

This is the natal day of him,
  Who, born in want and poverty,
Burst from his fetters, and arose,
  The freest of the free.

Arose to tell the watching earth
  What lowly men could feel and do,
To show that mighty, heaven-like souls
  In cottage hamlets grew.

Burns! thou hast given us a name
  To shield us from the taunts of scorn:
The plant that creeps amid the soil
  A glorious flower has borne.

Before the proudest of the earth
  We stand with an uplifted brow;
Like us, thou wast a toil-worn man,
  And we are noble now!

The critic, looking calmly on, may indeed question whether this new fashion of verse writing among working men has been always conducive to their own happiness. As for absolute success as poets, that was not to be expected of one in a hundred, so that we must not be disappointed if among the volumes of working men's poetry, of which we give a list at the head of our Article, only two should be found, on perusal, to contain any writing of a very high order, although these volumes form a very small portion of the verses which have been written, during the last forty years, by men engaged in the rudest and most monotonous toil. To

every man so writing, the art, doubtless, is an ennobling one. The habit of expressing thought in verse not only indicates culture, but is a culture in itself of a very high order. It teaches the writer to think tersely and definitely; it evokes in him the humanizing sense of grace and melody, not merely by enticing him to study good models, but by the very act of composition. It gives him a vent for sorrows, doubts, and aspirations, which might otherwise fret and canker within, breeding, as they too often do in the utterly dumb English peasant, self-devouring meditation, dogged melancholy, and fierce fanaticism. And if the effect of verse writing had stopped there, all had been well; but bad models have had their effect, as well as good ones, on the half-tutored taste of the working men, and engendered in them but too often a fondness for frothy magniloquence and ferocious raving, neither morally nor æsthetically profitable to themselves or their readers. There are excuses for the fault; the young of all ranks naturally enough mistake noise for awfulness, and violence for strength; and there is generally but too much, in the biographies of these working poets, to explain, if not to excuse, a vein of bitterness, which they certainly did not learn from their master, Burns. The two poets who have done them most harm, in teaching the evil trick of cursing and swearing, are Shelley and the Corn-Law Rhymer; and one can well imagine how seducing two such models must be, to men struggling to utter their own complaints. Of Shelley this is not the place to speak. But of the Corn-Law Rhymer we may say here, that howsoever he may have been indebted to Burns's example for the notion of writing at all, he has profited very little by Burns's own poems. Instead of the genial loving tone of the great Scotchman, we find in Elliott a tone of

deliberate savageness, all the more ugly, because evidently intentional. He tries to curse; 'he delights' —may we be forgiven if we misjudge the man—'in cursing;' he makes a science of it; he defiles, of malice prepense, the loveliest and sweetest thoughts and scenes (and he can be most sweet) by giving some sudden, sickening revulsion to his reader's feelings; and he does it generally with a power which makes it at once as painful to the calmer reader as alluring to those who are struggling with the same temptations as the poet. Now and then, his trick drags him down into sheer fustian and bombast; but not always. There is a terrible Dantean vividness of imagination about him, perhaps unequalled in England, in his generation. His poems are like his countenance, coarse and ungoverned, yet with an intensity of eye, a rugged massiveness of feature, which would be grand but for the seeming deficiency of love and of humour—love's twin and inseparable brother. Therefore it is, that although single passages may be found in his writings, of which Milton himself need not have been ashamed, his efforts at dramatic poetry are utter failures, dark, monstrous, unrelieved by any really human vein of feeling or character. As in feature, so in mind, he has not even the delicate and graceful organization which made up in Milton for the want of tenderness, and so enabled him to write, if not a drama, yet still the sweetest of masques and idyls.

Rather belonging to the same school than to that of Burns, though never degrading itself by Elliott's ferocity, is that extraordinary poem, 'The Purgatory of Suicides,' by Thomas Cooper. As he is still in the prime of life, and capable of doing more and better than he yet has done, we will not comment on it as freely as we have on Elliott, except to regret a similar

want of softness and sweetness, and also of a clearness and logical connexion of thought, in which Elliott seldom fails, except when cursing. The imagination is hardly as vivid as Elliott's, though the fancy and invention, the polish of the style, and the indications of profound thought on all subjects within the poet's reach, are superior in every way to those of the Corn-Law Rhymer; and when we consider that the man who wrote it had to gather his huge store of classic and historic anecdote while earning his living, first as a shoemaker, and then as a Wesleyan country preacher, we can only praise and excuse, and hope that the day may come when talents of so high an order will find some healthier channel for their energies than that in which they now are flowing.

Our readers may wonder at not seeing the Ettrick Shepherd's poems among the list at the head of the Article. It seems to us, however, that we have done right in omitting them. Doubtless, he too was awakened into song by the example of Burns; but he seems to us to owe little to his great predecessor, beyond the general consciousness that there was a virgin field of poetry in Scotch scenery, manners, and legends—a debt which Walter Scott himself probably owed to the Ayrshire peasant just as much as Hogg did. Indeed, we perhaps are right in saying, that had Burns not lived, neither Wilson, Galt, Allan Cunningham, or the crowd of lesser writers who have found material for their fancy in Scotch peculiarities, would have written as they have. The three first names, Wilson's above all, must have been in any case distinguished; yet it is surely no derogation to some of the most exquisite rural sketches in 'Christopher North's Recreations,' to claim them as the intellectual foster-children of 'The Cottar's Saturday Night.' In this respect, certainly,

the Ettrick Shepherd has a place in Burns's school, and, in our own opinion, one which has been very much overrated. But the deeper elements of Burns's mind, those which have especially endeared him to the working man, reappear very little, or not at all, in Hogg. He left his class too much below him; became too much of the mere æsthetic prodigy, and member of a literary clique; frittered away his great talents in brilliant talk and insincere Jacobite songs, and, in fine, worked no deliverance on the earth. It is sad to have to say this: but we had it forced upon us painfully enough a few days ago, when re-reading 'Kilmeny.' There may be beautiful passages in it; but it is not coherent, not natural, not honest. It is throughout an affectation of the Manichæan sentimental-sublime, which God never yet put into the heart of any brawny, long-headed, practical Borderer, and which he therefore probably put into his own head, or, as we call it, affected, for the time being; a method of poetry writing which comes forth out of nothing, and into nothing must return.

This is unfortunate, perhaps, for the world; for we question whether a man of talents in anywise to be compared with those of the Ettrick Shepherd has followed in the footsteps of Burns. Poor Tannahill, whose sad story is but too well known, perished early, at the age of thirty-six, leaving behind him a good many pretty love-songs of no great intrinsic value, if the specimens of them given in Mr. Whitelaw's collection are to be accepted as the best. Like all Burns's successors, including even Walter Scott and Hogg, we have but to compare him with his original to see how altogether unrivalled on his own ground the Ayrshire farmer was. In one feature only Tannahill's poems, and those later than him, except where pedantically

archaist, like many of Motherwell's, are an improvement on Burns; namely, in the more easy and complete interfusion of the two dialects, the Norse Scotch and the Romanesque English, which Allan Ramsay attempted in vain to unite; while Burns, though not succeeding by any means perfectly, welded them together into something of continuity and harmony—thus doing for the language of his own country very much what Chaucer did for that of England;—a happy union, in the opinion of those who, as we do, look on the vernacular Norse Scotch as no barbaric dialect, but as an independent tongue, possessing a copiousness, melody, terseness, and picturesqueness which makes it, both in prose and verse, a far better vehicle than the popular English for many forms of thought.

Perhaps the young peasant who most expressly stands out as the pupil and successor of Burns, is Robert Nicoll. He is a lesser poet, doubtless, than his master, and a lesser man, if the size and number of his capabilities be looked at; but he is a greater man, in that, from the beginning to the end of his career, he seems to have kept that very wholeness of heart and head which poor Burns lost. Nicoll's story is, mutatis mutandis, that of the Bethunes, and many a noble young Scotsman more. Parents holding a farm between Perth and Dunkeld, they and theirs before them for generations inhabitants of the neighbourhood, 'decent, honest, God-fearing people.' The farm is lost by reverses, and manfully Robert Nicoll's father becomes a day-labourer on the fields which he lately rented: and there begins, for the boy, from his earliest recollections, a life of steady, sturdy drudgery. But they must have been grand old folk, these parents, and in no wise addicted to wringing their hands over 'the great might-have-been.' Like true Scots Bible lovers, they do be-

lieve in a God, and in a will of God, underlying, absolute, loving, and believe that the might-have-been ought not to have been, simply because it has not been; and so they put their shoulders to the new collar patiently, cheerfully, hopefully, and teach the boys to do the same. The mother especially, as so many great men's mothers do, stands out large and heroic, from the time when, the farm being gone, she, 'the ardent book-woman,' finds her time too precious to be spent in reading, and sets little Robert to read to her as she works—what a picture!—to the last sad day, when, wanting money to come up to Leeds to see her dying darling, she 'shore for the siller,' rather than borrow it. And her son's life is like her own — a most pure, joyous, valiant little epic. Robert does not even take to work as something beyond himself, uninteresting and painful, which, however, must be done courageously: he lives in it, enjoys it as his proper element, one which is no more a burden and an exertion to him than the rush of the strid is to the trout who plays and feeds in it day and night, unconscious of the amount of muscular strength which he puts forth in merely keeping his place in the stream. Whether carrying Kenilworth in his plaid to the woods, to read while herding, or selling currants and whisky as the Perth storekeeper's apprentice, or keeping his little circulating library in Dundee, tormenting his pure heart with the thought of the twenty pounds which his mother has borrowed wherewith to start him, or editing the 'Leeds Times,' or lying on his early deathbed, just as life seems to be opening clear and broad before him, he

> Bates not a jot of heart or hope,

but steers right onward, singing over his work, without bluster or self-gratulation, but for very joy at having work to do. There is a keen practical insight about

him, rarely combined, in these days, with his single-minded determination to do good in his generation. His eye is single, and his whole body full of light.

It would indeed (writes the grocer's boy, encouraging his despondent and somewhat Werterean friend) be hangman's work to write articles one day to be forgotten to-morrow, if that were all; but you forget the comfort—the repayment. If one prejudice is overthrown, one error rendered untenable; if but one step in advance be the consequence of your articles and mine—the consequences of the labour of all true men—are we not deeply repaid?

Or again, in a right noble letter to his noble mother:—

That money of R.'s hangs like a millstone about my neck. If I had paid it, I would never borrow again from mortal man. But do not mistake me, mother; I am not one of those men who faint and falter in the great battle of life. God has given me too strong a heart for that. I look upon earth as a place where every man is set to struggle and to work, that he may be made humble and pure-hearted, and fit for that better land for which earth is a preparation—to which earth is the gate. . . . If men would but consider how little of real evil there is in all the ills of which they are so much afraid—poverty included—there would be more virtue and happiness, and less world and Mammon-worship on earth than is. I think, mother, that to me has been given talent; and if so, that talent was given to make it useful to man.

And yet there is a quiet self-respect about him withal:—

In my short course through life (says he in confidence to a friend at one-and-twenty) I have never feared an enemy, or failed a friend; and I live in the hope I never shall. For the rest, I have written my heart in my poems; and rude and unfinished, and hasty as they are, it can be read there.

* * * * * * *

From seven years of age to this very hour, I have been dependent only on my own head and hands for everything—for very bread. Long years ago—aye, even in childhood—adversity made me think, and feel, and suffer; and would pride allow me, I could tell the world many a deep tragedy enacted in the heart of a poor, forgotten, uncared-for boy. . . . But I thank God, that though I felt and suffered, the scathing blast neither blunted my perceptions of natural and moral beauty, nor, by withering the affections of my heart, made me a selfish man. Often when I look back I wonder how I bore the burden—how I did not end the evil day at once and for ever.

Such is the man, in his normal state; and as was to be expected, God's blessing rests on him. Whatever

he sets his hand to succeeds. Within a few weeks of his taking the editorship of the 'Leeds Times,' its circulation begins to rise rapidly, as was to be expected with an honest man to guide it. For Nicoll's political creed, though perhaps neither very deep nor wide, lies clear and single before him, as everything else which he does. He believes naturally enough in ultra-Radicalism according to the fashions of the Reform Bill era. That is the right thing; and for that he will work day and night, body and soul, and if needs be, die. There, in the editor's den at Leeds, he 'begins to see the truth of what you told me about the world's unworthiness; but stop a little. I am not sad as yet. . . . . If I am hindered from feeling the soul of poetry among woods and fields, I yet trust I am struggling for something worth prizing—something of which I am not ashamed, and need not be. If there be aught on earth worth aspiring to, it is the lot of him who is enabled to do something for his miserable and suffering fellow-men; and this you and I will try to do at least.'

His friend is put to work a ministerial paper, with orders 'not to be rash, but to elevate the population gradually;' and finding those orders to imply a considerable leaning towards the By-ends, Lukewarm, and Facing-both-ways school, kicks over the traces, wisely, in Nicoll's eyes, and breaks loose.

> Keep up your spirits (says honest Nicoll). You are higher at this moment in my estimation, in your own, and that of every honest man, than you ever were before. Tait's advice was just such as I should have expected of him; honest as honesty itself. You must never again accept a paper but where you can tell the whole truth without fear or favour. . . . Tell E. (the broken-loose editor's lady-love) from me to estimate as she ought the nobility and determination of the man who has dared to act as you have done. Prudent men will say that you are hasty: but you have done right, whatever may be the consequences.

This is the spirit of Robert Nicoll; the spirit which

is the fruit of early purity and self-restraint, of living 'on bread-and-cheese and water,' that he may buy books; of walking out to the Inch of Perth at four o'clock on summer mornings, to write and read in peace before he returns to the currants and the whisky. The nervous simplicity of the man comes out in the very nervous simplicity of the prose he writes; and though there be nothing very new or elevated in it, or indeed in his poems themselves, we call on our readers to admire a phenomenon so rare, in the 'upper classes' at least, in these days, and taking a lesson from the peasant's son, rejoice with us that 'a man is born into the world.'

For Nicoll, as few do, practises what he preaches. It seems to him, once on a time, right and necessary that Sir William Molesworth should be returned for Leeds; and Nicoll having so determined, 'throws himself, body and soul, into the contest, with such ardour, that his wife afterwards said, and we can well believe it, that if Sir William had failed, Robert would have died on the instant!'—why not? Having once made up his mind that that was the just and right thing, the thing which was absolutely good for Leeds, and the human beings who lived in it, was it not a thing to die for, even if it had been but the election of a new beadle? The advanced sentry is set to guard some obscure worthless dike-end—obscure and worthless in itself, but to him a centre of infinite duty. True, the fate of the camp does not depend on its being taken; if the enemy round it, there are plenty behind to blow them out again. But that is no reason whatsoever why he, before any odds, should throw his musket over his shoulder, and retreat gracefully to the lines. He was set there to stand by that, whether dike-end or representation of Leeds; that is the right

thing for him; and for that right he will fight, and if he be killed, die. So have all brave men felt, and so have all brave deeds been done, since man walked the earth. It is because that spirit, the spirit of faith, has died out among us, that so few brave deeds are done now, except on battle-fields, and in hovels whereof none but God and the angels know.

So the man prospers. Several years of honourable and self-restraining love bring him a wife, beautiful, loving, worshipping his talents; a help meet for him, such as God will send at times to those whom he loves. Kind men meet and love and help him—'The Johnstones, Mr. Tait, William and Mary Howitt;' Sir William Molesworth, hearing of his last illness, sends him unsolicited fifty pounds, which, as we understand it, Nicoll accepts without foolish bluster about independence. Why not?—man should help man, and be helped by him. Would he not have done as much for Sir William? Nothing to us proves Nicoll's heart-wholeness more than the way in which he talks of his benefactors, in a tone of simple gratitude and affection, without fawning, and without vapouring. The man has too much self-respect to consider himself lowered by accepting a favour.

But he must go after all. The editor's den at Leeds is not the place for lungs bred on Perthshire breezes; and work rises before him, huger and heavier as he goes on, till he drops under the ever-increasing load. He will not believe it at first. In sweet child-like playful letters, he tells his mother that it is nothing. It has done him good—'opened the grave before his eyes, and taught him to think of death.' 'He trusts that he has not borne this, and suffered, and thought in vain.' This too, he hopes, is to be a fresh lesson-page of experience for his work. Alas! a few months more of bitter suffering, and of generous kind-

ness and love from all around him,—and it is over with him at the age of twenty-three. Shall we regret him?—shall we not rather believe that God knew best; and considering the unhealthy moral atmosphere of the second-class press, and the strange confused ways into which old ultra-Radicalism, finding itself too narrow for the new problems of the day, has stumbled and floundered during the last fifteen years, believe that he might have been a worse man had he been a longer-lived one, and thank heaven that 'the righteous is taken away from the evil to come?'

As it is, he ends as he began. The first poem in his book is 'The Ha' Bible;' and the last, written a few days before his death, is still the death-song of a man—without fear, without repining, without boasting, blessing and loving the earth which he leaves, yet with a clear joyful eye upwards and outwards and homewards. And so ends his little epic, as we called it. May Scotland see many such another!

The actual poetic value of his verses is not first-rate by any means. He is far inferior to Burns in range of subject, as he is in humour and pathos. Indeed, there is very little of these latter qualities in him anywhere—rather playfulness, flashes of child-like fun, as in 'The Provost,' and 'Bonnie Bessie Lee.' But he has attained a mastery over English, a simplicity and quiet which Burns never did; and also, we need not say, a moral purity. His 'poems, illustrative of the Scotch peasantry,' are charming throughout—alive and bright with touches of real humanity, and sympathy with characters apparently antipodal to his own.

His more earnest poems are somewhat tainted with that cardinal fault of his school, of which he steered so clear in prose—fine words; yet he never, like the Corn-Law Rhymer, falls a cursing. He is evidently not a good hater even of 'priests and kings, and aristocrats,

and superstition;' or perhaps he worked all that froth safely over and off in debating-club speeches and leading articles, and left us, in these poems, the genuine Metheglin of his inner heart, sweet, clear, and strong; for there is no form of loveable or right thing which this man has come across, which he does not seem to have appreciated. Beside pure love and the beauties of nature, those on which every man of poetic power—and a great many of none, as a matter of course, have a word to say, he can feel for and with the drunken beggar, and the warriors of the ruined manor-house, and the monks of the abbey, and the old mailed Normans with their 'priest with cross and counted beads in the little Saxon chapel'—things which a radical editor might have been excused for passing by with a sneer.

His verses to his wife are a delicious little glimpse of Eden; and his 'People's Anthem' rises into somewhat of true grandeur by virtue of simplicity:—

Lord, from Thy blessed throne,
Sorrow look down upon!
God save the Poor!
Teach them true liberty—
Make them from tyrants free—
Let their homes happy be!
God save the Poor!

The arms of wicked men
Do Thou with might restrain—
God save the Poor!
Raise Thou their lowliness—
Succour Thou their distress—
Thou whom the meanest bless!
God save the Poor!

Give them stanch honesty—
Let their pride manly be—
God save the Poor!
Help them to hold the right;
Give them both truth and might,
Lord of all LIFE and LIGHT!
God save the Poor!

And so we leave Robert Nicoll, with the parting remark, that if the 'poems illustrative of the feelings of the intelligent and religious among the working-classes of Scotland' be fair samples of that which they profess to be, Scotland may thank God, that in spite of temporary manufacturing rot-heaps, she is still whole at heart; and that the influence of her great peasant poet, though it may seem at first likely to be adverse to Christianity, has helped, as we have already hinted, to purify and not to taint; to destroy the fungus, but not to touch the heart, of the grand old Covenant-kirk life-tree.

Still sweeter, and, alas! still sadder, is the story of the two Bethunes. If Nicoll's life, as we have said, be a solitary melody, and short though triumphant strain of work-music, theirs is a harmony and true concert of fellow-joys, fellow-sorrows, fellow-drudgery, fellow-authorship, mutual throughout, lovely in their joint-life, and in their deaths not far divided. Alexander survives his brother John only long enough to write his Memoirs, and then follows; and we have his story given us by Mr. M'Combie, in a simple unassuming little volume—not to be read without many thoughts, perhaps not rightly without tears. Mr. M'Combie has been wise enough not to attempt panegyric. He is all but prolix in details, filling up some half of his volume with letters of preternatural length from Alexander to his publishers and critics, and from the said publishers and critics to Alexander, altogether of an unromantic and business-like cast, but entirely successful in doing that which a book should do—namely, in showing the world that here was a man of like passions with ourselves, who bore from boyhood to the grave hunger, cold, wet, rags, brutalizing and health-destroying toil, and all the storms of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and conquered them every one.

Alexander is set at fourteen to throw earth out of a ditch so deep, that it requires the full strength of a grown man, and loses flesh and health under the exertion; he is twice blown up in quarrying with his own blast, and left for dead, recovers slowly, maimed and scarred, with the loss of an eye. John, when not thirteen, is set to stone-breaking on the roads during intense cold, and has to keep himself from being frost-bitten and heart-broken by monkey gambols; takes to the weaving trade, and having helped his family by the most desperate economy to save 10*l.* wherewith to buy looms, begins to work them, with his brother as an apprentice, and finds the whole outlay rendered useless the very same year by the failures of 1825-26. So the two return to day-labour at fourteenpence a day. John, in a struggle to do task-work honestly, over-exerts himself, and ruins his digestion for life. Next year he is set in November to clean out a watercourse knee-deep in water; then to take marl from a pit; and then to drain standing water off a swamp during an intense December frost; and finds himself laid down with a three months' cough, and all but sleepless illness, laying the foundation of the consumption which destroyed him. But the two brothers will not give in. Poetry they will write; and they write it to the best of their powers, on scraps of paper, after the drudgery of the day, in a cabin pervious to every shower, teaching themselves the right spelling of the words from some 'Christian Remembrancer' or other—apparently not our meek and unbiassed contemporary of that name; and all this without neglecting their work a day or even an hour, when the weather permitted—the 'only thing which tempted them to fret,' being—hear it, readers, and perpend!—'the being kept at home by rain and snow.' Then an additional malady (apparently some calculous

one) comes on John, and stops by him for the six remaining years of his life. Yet between 1826 and 1832, John has saved 14*l.* out of his miserable earnings, to be expended to the last farthing on his brother's recovery from the second quarry accident. Surely the devil is trying hard to spoil these men. But no. They are made perfect by sufferings. In the house with one long narrow room, and a small vacant space at the end of it, lighted by a single pane of glass, they write and write untiring, during the long summer evenings, poetry, 'Tales of the Scottish Peasant Life,' which at last bring them in somewhat; and a work on practical economy, which is bepraised and corrected by kind critics in Edinburgh, and at last published—without a sale. Perhaps one cause of its failure might be found in those very corrections. There were too many violent political allusions in it, complains their good Mentor of Edinburgh; and persuades them, seemingly the most meek and teachable of heroes, to omit them; though Alexander, while submitting, pleads fairly enough for retaining them, in a passage which we will give, as a specimen of the sort of English possible to be acquired by a Scotch day-labourer, self-educated, all but the rudiments of reading and writing, and a few lectures on popular poetry from 'a young student of Aberdeen,' now the Rev. Mr. Adamson, who must look back on the friendship which he bore these two young men, as one of the noblest pages in his life.

Talk to the many of religion, and they will put on a long face, confess that it is a thing of the greatest importance to all—and go away and forget the whole. Talk to them of education: they will readily acknowledge that it's 'a braw thing to be weel learned,' and begin a lamentation, which is only shorter than the lamentations of Jeremiah because they cannot make it as long, on the ignorance of the age in which they live; but they neither stir hand nor foot in the matter. But speak to them of politics, and their excited countenances and kindling eye show in a moment how deeply they are

interested. Politics are therefore an important feature, and an almost indispensable element in such a work as mine. Had it consisted solely of exhortations to industry and rules of economy, it would have been dismissed with an 'Ou ay, it's braw for him to crack that way: but if he were whaur we are, 'deed he wad just hae to do as we do.' But by mixing up the science with politics, and giving it an occasional political impetus, a different result may be reasonably expected. In these days no man can be considered a patriot or friend of the poor, who is not also a politician.

It is amusing, by the bye, to see how the world changes its codes of respectability, and how, what is anathema in one generation, becomes trite orthodoxy in the next. The political sins in the work were, that 'my brother had attacked the corn-laws with some severity; and I have attempted to level a battery against that sort of servile homage which the poor pay to the rich!'

There is no use pursuing the story much further. They again save a little money, and need it; for the estate on which they have lived from childhood changing hands, they are, with their aged father, expelled from the dear old dog-kennel, to find house-room where they can. Why not?—'it was not in the bond.' The house did not belong to them; nothing of it, at least, which could be specified in any known lease. True, there may have been associations: but what associations can men be expected to cultivate on fourteenpence a day? So they must forth, with their two aged parents, and build with their own hands a new house elsewhere, having saved some 30*l.* from the sale of their writings. The house, as we understand, stands to this day—hereafter to become a sort of artisan's caaba and pilgrim's station, only second to Burns's grave. That, at least, it will become, whenever the meaning of the words 'worth' and 'worship' shall become rightly understood among us.

For what are these men, if they are not heroes and saints? Not of the Popish sort, abject and effeminate,

but of the true, human, evangelic sort, masculine and grand—like the figures in Raffaelle's Cartoons compared with those of Fra Bartolomeo. Not from superstition, not from selfish prudence, but from devotion to their aged parents, and the righteous dread of dependence, they die voluntary celibates, although their writings show that they, too, could have loved as nobly as they did all other things. The extreme of endurance, self-restraint, of 'conquest of the flesh,' outward as well as inward, is the life-long lot of these men; and they go through it. They have their share of injustice, tyranny, disappointment; one by one each bright boy's dream of success and renown is scourged out of their minds, and sternly and lovingly their Father in heaven teaches them the lesson of all lessons. By what hours of misery and blank despair that faith was purchased, we can only guess; the simple strong men give us the result, but never dream of sitting down and analysing the process for the world's amusement or their own glorification. We question, indeed, whether they could have told us; whether the mere fact of a man's being able to dissect himself, in public or in private, is not proof-patent that he is no man, but only a shell of a man, with works inside, which can of course be exhibited and taken to pieces—a rather more difficult matter with flesh and blood. If we believe that God is educating, the when, the where, and the how are not only unimportant, but, considering who is the teacher, unfathomable to us, and it is enough to be able to believe with John Bethune, that the Lord of all things is influencing us through all things; whether sacraments, or sabbaths, or sun-gleams, or showers—all things are ours, for all are His, and we are His, and He is ours;—and for the rest, to say with the same John Bethune:—

Oh, God of glory! thou hast treasured up
For me my little portion of distress;
But with each draught—in every bitter cup
Thy hand hath mixed, to make its soreness less,
Some cordial drop, for which thy name I bless,
And offer up my mite of thankfulness.
Thou hast chastised my frame with dire disease,
Long, obdurate, and painful; and thy hand
Hath wrung cold sweat-drops from my brow; for these
I thank thee too. Though pangs at thy command
Have compassed me about, still, with the blow,
Patience sustained my soul amid its woe.

Of the actual literary merit of these men's writings there is less to be said. However extraordinary, considering the circumstances under which they were written, may be the polish and melody of John's verse, or the genuine spiritual health, deep death-and-devil-defying earnestness, and shrewd practical wisdom, which shines through all that either brother writes, they do not possess any of that fertile originality, which alone would have enabled them, as it did Burns, to compete with the literary savans, who, though for the most part of inferior genius, have the help of information and appliances, from which they were shut out. Judging them, as the true critic, like the true moralist, is bound to do, 'according to what they had, not according to what they had not,' they are men who, with average advantages, might have been famous in their day. God thought it better for them to 'hide them in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues;' and—seldom believed truism—He knows best. Alexander shall not, according to his early dreams, 'earn nine hundred pounds by writing a book, like Burns,' even though his ideal method of spending be to buy all the boys in the parish 'new shoes with iron tackets and heels,' and send them home with shillings for their mothers, and feed their fathers on wheat bread and milk, with tea and bannocks for Sabbath-days, and build a house

for the poor old toil-stiffened man whom he once saw draining the hill-field, 'with a yard full of gooseberries, and an apple-tree!'—not that, nor even, as the world judges, better than that, shall he be allowed to do. The poor, for whom he writes his 'Practical Economy,' shall not even care to read it; and he shall go down to the grave a failure and a lost thing in the eyes of men:—but not in the eyes of grand God-fearing old Alison Christie, his mother, as he brings her, scrap by scrap, the proofs of their dead idol's poems, which she has prayed to be spared just to see once in print, and, when the last half-sheet is read, loses her sight for ever;—not in her eyes, nor in those of the God who saw him, in the cold winter mornings, wearing John's clothes, to warm them for the dying man before he got up.

His grief at his brother's death is inconsolable. He feels for the first time in his life, what a lot is his—for he feels for the first time that—

> Parent and friend and brother gone,
> I stand upon the earth alone.

Four years he lingers; friends begin to arise from one quarter and another, but he, not altogether wisely or well, refuses all pecuniary help. At last Mr. Hugh Miller recommends him to be editor of a projected 'Non-Intrusion' paper in Dumfries, with a salary, to him boundless, of 100*l.* a year. Too late! The iron has entered too deeply into his soul; in a few weeks more he is lying in his brother's grave—'Lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths not divided.'

'William Thom of Inverury,' is a poet altogether of the same school. His 'Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver' are superior to those of either Nicoll or the Bethunes, the little love-songs in the

volume reminding us of Burns's best manner, and the two languages in which he writes being better amalgamated, as it seems to us, than in any Scotch song writer. Moreover, there is a terseness, strength, and grace about some of these little songs, which would put to shame many a volume of vague and windy verse, which the press sees yearly sent forth by men, who, instead of working at the loom, have been pampered from their childhood with all the means and appliances of good taste and classic cultivation. We have room only for one specimen of his verse, not the most highly finished, but of a beauty which can speak for itself.

Dreamings of the Bereaved.

The morning breaks bonny o'er mountain and stream,
An' troubles the hallowed breath of my dream.
The gowd light of morning is sweet to the e'e,
But ghost-gathering midnight, thou'rt dearer to me.
The dull common world then sinks from my sight,
And fairer creations arise to the night;
When drowsy oppression has sleep-sealed my e'e,
Then bright are the visions awakened to me!

Oh, come, spirit-mother! discourse of the hours
My young bosom beat all its beating to yours,
When heart-woven wishes in soft counsel fell
On ears—how unheedful, proved sorrow might tell!
That deathless affection nae sorrow could break;
When all else forsook me, ye would na forsake;
Then come, oh my mother! come often to me,
An' soon an' for ever I'll come unto thee!

An' then, shrouded loveliness! soul-winning Jean,
How cold was thy hand on my bosom yestreen!
'Twas kind—for the love that your e'e kindled there
Will burn, aye an' burn, till that breast beat nae mair—
Our bairnies sleep round me, oh bless ye their sleep!
Your ain dark-eyed Willie will wauken an' weep!
But blythe through his weepin', he'll tell me how you,
His heaven-hamed mammie, was dauting his brow.

Though dark be our dwellin', our happin' tho' bare,
And night closes round us in cauldness and care,
Affection will warm us—and bright are the beams
That halo our hame in yon dear land o' dreams:

Then weel may I welcome the night's deathly reign,
Wi' souls of the dearest I mingle me then;
The gowd light of morning is lightless to me,
But, oh! for the night with its ghost revelrie!

But, even more interesting than the poems themselves, is the autobiographical account prefixed, with its vivid sketches of factory life in Aberdeen, of the old regime of 1770; when 'four days did the weaver's work —Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, were of course jubilee. Lawn frills gorged (?) freely from under the wrists of his fine blue gilt-buttoned coat. He dusted his head with white flour on Sunday, smirked and wore a cane; walked in clean slippers on Monday; Tuesday heard him talk war bravado, quote Volney, and get drunk: weaving commenced gradually on Wednesday. Then were little children pirn-fillers, and such were taught to steal warily past the gate-keeper, concealing the bottle. These wee smugglers had a drop for their services, over and above their chances of profiting by the elegant and edifying discussions uttered in their hearing. Infidelity was then getting fashionable.' But by the time Thom enters on his seventeen years' weaving, in 1814, the Nemesis has come. 'Wages are six shillings a week where they had been forty; but the weaver of forty shillings, with money instead of wit, had bequeathed his vices to the weaver of six shillings, with wit instead of money.' The introduction of machinery works evil rather than good, on account of the reckless way in which it is used, and the reckless material which it uses. 'Vacancies in the factory, daily made, were daily filled by male and female workers; often queer enough people, and from all parts—none too coarse for using. The pickpocket, trained to the loom six months in Bridewell, came forth a journeyman weaver; and his precious experiences were infused into the common moral puddle, and in due time did

their work.' No wonder that 'the distinctive character of all sunk away. Man became less manly—woman unlovely and rude.' No wonder that the factory, like too many more, though a thriving concern to its owners, becomes 'a prime nursery of vice and sorrow.' 'Virtue perished utterly within its walls, and was dreamed of no more; or, if remembered at all, only in a deep and woful sense of self-debasement—a struggling to forget, where it was hopeless to obtain.' But to us, almost the most interesting passage in his book, and certainly the one which bears most directly on the general purpose of this article, is one in which he speaks of the effects of song on himself and his fellow factory-workers.

Moore was doing all he could for love-sick boys and girls, yet they had never enough! Nearer and dearer to hearts like ours was the Ettrick Shepherd, then in his full tide of song and story; but nearer and dearer still than he, or any living songster, was our ill-fated fellow-craftsman, Tannahill. Poor weaver chiel! what we owe to you!—your 'Braes of Balquidder,' and 'Yon Burnside,' and 'Gloomy Winter,' and the 'Minstrel's' wailing ditty, and the noble 'Gleneiffer.' Oh! how they did ring above the rattle of a thousand shuttles! Let me again proclaim the debt which we owe to these song spirits, as they walked in melody from loom to loom, ministering to the low-hearted; and when the breast was filled with everything but hope and happiness, let only break out the healthy and vigorous chorus, 'A man's a man for a' that,' and the fagged weaver brightens up. . . . Who dare measure the restraining influences of these very songs? To us they were all instead of Sermons. Had one of us been bold enough to enter a church, he must have been ejected for the sake of decency. His forlorn and curiously patched habiliments would have contested the point of attraction with the ordinary eloquence of that period. Church bells rang not for us. Poets were indeed our priests: but for those, the last relic of moral existence would have passed away. Song was the dew-drop which gathered during the long dark night of despondency, and was sure to glitter in the very first blink of the sun. You might have seen 'Auld Robin Gray' wet the eyes that could be tearless amid cold and hunger, and weariness and pain. Surely, surely, then there was to that heart one passage left.

Making all allowance for natural and pardonable high-colouring, we recommend this most weighty and

significant passage to the attention of all readers, and draw an argumentum a fortiori, from the high estimation in which Thom holds those very songs of Tannahill's, of which we just now spoke somewhat depreciatingly, for the extreme importance which we attach to popular poetry, as an agent of incalculable power in moulding the minds of nations.

The popular poetry of Germany has held that great nation together, united and heart-whole for centuries, in spite of every disadvantage of internal division, and the bad influence of foreign taste; and the greatest of their poets have not thought it beneath them to add their contributions, and their very best, to the common treasure, meant not only for the luxurious and learned, but for the workman and the child at school. In Great Britain, on the contrary, the people have been left to form their own tastes, and choose their own modes of utterance, with great results, both for good and evil; and there has sprung up before the new impulse which Burns gave to popular poetry, a considerable literature —considerable not only from its truth and real artistic merit, but far more so from its being addressed principally to the working-classes. Even more important is this people's literature question, in our eyes, than the more palpable factors of the education question, about which we now hear such ado. It does seem to us, that to take every possible precaution about the spiritual truth which children are taught in school, and then leave to chance the more impressive and abiding teaching which popular literature, songs especially, give them out of doors, is as great a niaiserie as that of the Tractarians who insisted on getting into the pulpit in their surplices, as a sign that the clergy only had the right of preaching to the people, while they forgot that, by means of a free press, (of the licence of which they,

too, were not slack to avail themselves,) every penny-a-liner was preaching to the people daily, and would do so, maugre their surplices, to the end of time. The man who makes the people's songs is a true popular preacher. Whatsoever, true or false, he sends forth, will not be carried home, as a sermon often is, merely in heads, to be forgotten before the week is out: it will ring in the ears, and cling round the imagination, and follow the pupil to the workshop, and the tavern, and the fireside; even to the deathbed, such power is in the magic of rhyme. The emigrant, deep in Australian forests, may take down Chalmers's sermons on Sabbath evenings from the scanty shelf: but the songs of Burns have been haunting his lips, and cheering his heart, and moulding him, unconsciously to himself, in clearing and in pasture all the weary week. True, if he be what a Scotchman should be, more than one old Hebrew psalm has brought its message to him during these week-days: but there are feelings of his nature on which those psalms, not from defect, but from their very purpose, do not touch: how is he to express them, but in the songs which echo them? These will keep alive, and intensify in him, and in the children who learn them from his lips, all which is like themselves. Is it, we ask again, to be left to chance what sort of songs these shall be?

As for poetry written for the working classes by the upper, such attempts at it as we yet have seen, may be considered nil. The upper must learn to know more of the lower, and to make the lower know more of them—a frankness of which we honestly believe they will never have to repent. Moreover, they must read Burns a little more, and cavaliers and Jacobites a little less. As it is, their efforts have been as yet exactly in that direction which would most safely secure the

blessings of undisturbed obscurity. Whether 'secular' or 'spiritual,' they have thought proper to adopt a certain Tommy-good-child tone, which, whether to Glasgow artisans or Dorsetshire labourers, or indeed for any human being who is 'grinding among the iron facts of life,' is, to say the least, nauscous; and the only use of their poematicula has been to demonstrate practically, the existence of a great and fearful gulf between those who have, and those who have not, in thought as well as in purse, which must be, in the former article at least, bridged over as soon as possible, if we are to remain one people much longer. The attempts at verse for children are somewhat more successful—a certain little 'Moral Songs' especially, said to emanate from the Tractarian School, yet full of a health, spirit, and wild sweetness, which makes its authoress, in our eyes, 'wiser than her teachers.' But this is our way. We are too apt to be afraid of the men, and take to the children as our pis aller, covering our despair of dealing with the majority, the adult population, in a pompous display of machinery for influencing that very small fraction, the children. 'Oh, but the destinies of the empire depend on the rising generation!' Who has told us so?—how do we know that they do not depend on the risen generation? Who are likely to do more work during our lifetime, for good and evil,—those who are now between fifteen and five-and-forty, or those who are between five and fifteen? Yet for those former, the many, and the working, and the powerful, all we seem to be inclined to do is to parody Scripture, and say, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.'

Not that we ask any one to sit down, and, out of mere benevolence, to write songs for the people.

Wooden, out of a wooden birthplace, would such go forth, to feed fires, not spirits. But if any man shall read these pages, to whom God has given a truly poetic temperament, a gallant heart, a melodious ear, a quick and sympathetic eye for all forms of human joy, and sorrow, and humour, and grandeur; an insight which can discern the outlines of the butterfly, when clothed in the roughest and most rugged chrysalis-hide; if the teachers of his heart and purposes, and not merely of his taste and sentiments, have been the great songs of his own and of every land and age; if he can see in the divine poetry of David and Solomon, of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and, above all, in the parables of Him who spake as never man spake, the models and elemental laws of a people's poetry, alike according to the will of God and the heart of man; if he can welcome gallantly and hopefully the future, and yet know that it must be, unless it would be a monster and a machine, the loving and obedient child of the past; if he can speak of the subjects which alone will interest the many, on love, marriage, the sorrows of the poor, their hopes, political and social, their wrongs, as well as their sins and duties; and that with a fervour and passion akin to the spirit of Burns and Elliott, yet with more calmness, more purity, more wisdom, and therefore with more hope, as one who stands upon a vantage ground of education and culture, sympathizing none the less with those who struggle behind him in the valley of the shadow of death, yet seeing from the mountain peaks the coming dawn, invisible as yet to them.—Then let that man think it no fall, but rather a noble rise, to leave awhile the barren glacier ranges of pure art, for the fertile gardens of practical and popular song, and write for the many, and with the many, in words such as they can understand; remembering that that which is

simplest is always deepest; that the many contain in themselves the few; and that when he speaks to the wanderer and the drudge, he speaks to the elemental and primeval man, and in him speaks to all who have risen out of him. Let him try, undiscouraged by inevitable failures; and if at last he succeeds in giving vent to one song which will cheer hardworn hearts at the loom and the forge, or wake one pauper's heart with the hope that his children are destined not to die as he died, or recall, amid Canadian forests or Australian sheep-walks, one thrill of love for the old country, her liberties, and her laws, and her religion, to the settler's heart;—let that man know that he has earned a higher place among the spirits of the wise and good, by doing, in spite of the unpleasantness of self-denial, the duty which lay nearest him, than if he had outrivalled Goethe on his own classic ground, and made all the cultivated and the comfortable of the earth desert, for the exquisite creations of his fancy, Faust, and Tasso, and Iphigenie.

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